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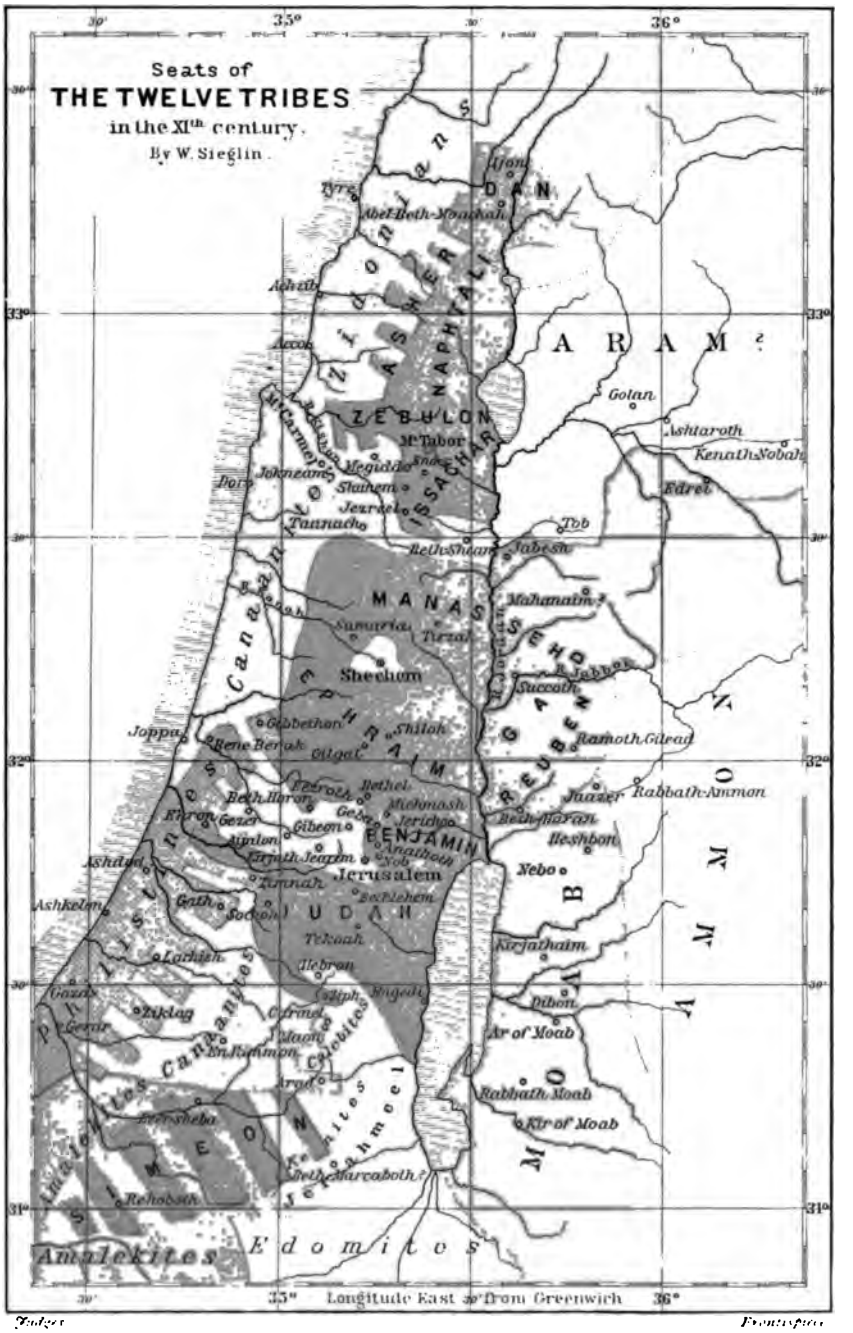
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Beth Haran
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Ajalon
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Canaanites
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Jerahmeelites
Arad
Rabbath Moab
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Kir of Moab
SIMEON
Amalekites
Beth Marcaboth?
Rehoboth
Edomites
MOAB
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The Book of Judges

MOORE

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THE SACRED BOOKS

OF THE

Old and New Testaments

A NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With Explanatory Notes and Pictorial Illustrations

PREPARED BY

eminent Biblical scholars of Europe and of America

AND EDITED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS

BY

Paul Haupt

PROFESSOR IN THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

BALTIMORE

PART 7

The Book of Judges

TRANSLATED BY

G · F · MOORE

New York

DODD, MEAD, AND COMPANY

1898

London

JAMES CLARKE AND COMPANY

Stuttgart

DEUTSCHE VERLAGS-ANSTALT

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THE

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With Explanatory Notes

AND PICTORIAL ILLUSTRATIONS

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THE REV. G · F · MOORE, D.D

PROFESSOR IN ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
ANDOVER, MASS.



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Introductory Remarks

THE present rendering of the Old Testament is not a revision of the Authorized Version, but a New Translation from the Hebrew, in modern English. The aim has been to render the sense of the original as faithfully as possible rather than to sacrifice that sense in order to give a literal translation.

This new Translation appeals to all interested in the Bible. The Explanatory Notes are free from technical details which have no interest for the average reader. We had no desire (as the translators of the Authorized Version say in their Preface) *to weary the unlearned, who need not know so much; and trouble the learned, who know it already.* The reader may rest assured, however, that all variations from the Authorized Version in the present Translation are the results of the ripest Biblical scholarship of the present generation both in Europe and in America. The translation is based throughout on the new critical edition of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, published under the auspices of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

Departures from the Received Text are indicated by special marks, whereby the reader can see at a glance whether a variation is based on parallel passages, or on the authority of the Ancient Versions, or is merely a conjectural emendation, &c. These critical marks are, designedly, so unobtrusive as not to interfere with the comfort of the ordinary reader; they are mainly intended for the benefit of those who are interested in the details of textual criticism.

Explanation of Critical Marks.

(1) ◦ ◦ (*i. e.* V = *Versions*) indicate a reading adopted on the authority of the Ancient Versions (*Septuagint, Targums, Peshita, Vulgate*, &c., in reference to which the reader may consult the Preface to the Authorized Version, also the List of Abbreviations below, p. ix, under LXX, Pesh., Targ., Vulg.).

(2) ◦ ◦ (*i. e.* c = *conjecture*) indicate Conjectural Emendations.

(3) ◦ ◦ (*i. e.* נ, the first letter of the Hebrew word נקוד *niqqûd* 'punctuation') indicate changes involving merely a different division of the consonantal text, or a departure from the vowel-points which the so-called Masorites added to the original consonantal text in the eighth and ninth centuries A. D.

(4) ◦ ◦ (*i. e.* Q = *Qĕrê*) indicate that the marginal reading (Heb. *Qĕrê* 'what is to be read') has been adopted instead of the *Kĕthîb* 'what is written.'

(5) ‘ ’ indicate changes introduced by reason of Parallel Passages.

(6) ‘ ’ indicate Doubtful Words or Passages.

(7) ‘ ’ indicate deviations from the Received (or Masoretic) Text, suggested by the Versions as well as by Parallel Passages.

(8) ‹ › indicate departures from the Masoretic reading of the consonantal text, which are supported by the Ancient Versions.

(9) In cases where critical marks occur without any letters or words between them (‘ ’, ‹ ›, &c.), Omissions are indicated, based on the Versions or on Conjectural Emendations, &c.

(10) * * indicate words implied, but not expressed, in the Hebrew. These marks, therefore, take the place of *italics* in the Authorized Version.

(11) [] indicate Transposed Passages, the traditional position of the words in the Received Text being marked by [], while the transposed words are enclosed in []; see *e. g.* Ps. **35**, 7.

(12) | indicates transposition of the Masoretic “:” which marks the end of a verse in the Hebrew Text.

(13) indicate Corrupt and Unintelligible Passages.

(14) * * * * * indicate Lacunæ in the Hebrew Text.

Explanation of Colors.

Older incorporated documents or later sections in Biblical Books of a composite character are printed on backgrounds of different colors. The explanation of the colors employed in the Books of Isaiah and of Judges is given on p. 132 of the Notes on Isaiah and on p. 46 of the Notes on Judges, respectively.

Footnotes.

Words or passages printed as notes at the bottom of the pages of the translation represent subsequent additions to the original text; *cf.* Notes on Judges, p. 47, ll. 5 ff.; Notes on Isaiah, p. 209, ll. 33 ff.

Marginal Figures.

In the Explanatory Notes the figures in the margin on the right refer to the chapters and verses commented on; the figures in the margin on the left merely number the lines. On those pages, however, where there are no references to chapters and verses in the margin the line-numbers are placed in the outer margin. In the Translation the lines are always numbered in the inner margin, while the traditional numbers of the chapters and verses are placed in the outer margin.

Heavy-faced Numerals.

Heavy-faced numerals are used instead of Roman letters to distinguish the number of the chapter from the number of the verse; *e. g.* Ps. **88**, 8 = Psalm lxxxviii, verse 8; but Pss. **88**. **89** = Psalm lxxxviii and Psalm lxxxix.

References to Biblical Passages.

References to Biblical passages follow, throughout, the Authorized Version, not the Hebrew Text. It is well known that the division of the chapters is occasionally not the same in the Hebrew and in the English Bibles; and that the title of a Psalm, where it consists of more than two words, is usually reckoned in Hebrew as the first verse.

Untranslated Hebrew Words.

A few Hebrew words have been left untranslated, viz. *ben*, the Hebrew word for *son* (e. g. *Isaiah ben-Amoz = Isaiah, the son of Amoz*); *Sheôl* (Heb. *shĕ'ôl*), the abode of departed spirits, the habitation of the dead (Greek *Hades*); *Asheráh*, the sacred post or pole, the wooden symbol of a goddess, beside an altar (see Notes on Judges, p. 57, l. 32; p. 69, l. 22); *Negeb*, the steppe-like region in the South of Palestine (see Notes on Judges, p. 49, l. 8); *Arabah*, the great geologic depression extending from the Dead Sea to the eastern gulf of the Red Sea (see Notes on Judges, p. 64, l. 39; *cf.* Notes on Isaiah, p. 159, l. 14); *Selah* at the end of certain stanzas in the Psalms (see Notes on the Psalms, p. 165, l. 8); *Satan*, in Hebrew = *adversary*, *accuser* (see Notes on Ps. **109**, 6); *Hallelujah* (Ps. **104**, 35 &c.) = Praise ye JAH (a shorter form of JHVH); *Sabaoth* (*cf.* Jas. **5**, 4; Rom. **9**, 29 = Is. **1**, 9) in the name *JHVH Sabaoth*, JHVH of the Hosts, *i. e.* the God of the armies of Israel (1 Sam. **17**, 45; *cf.* Pss. **44**, 9; **60**, 10 = **108**, 11). For JHVH, see below, List of Abbreviations, p. viii.

Transliteration of Oriental Names.

All Biblical names are given in the form used in the Authorized Version. In the transliteration of other Hebrew words, or of modern Oriental (Arabic) names, the vowels have their Italian sounds: *â* is like the *a* in *far* or *father*; *î* is the *i* in *marine*; and *û* = *oo* in *cool*; *é* = *a* in *name*; short *ĭ* = *i* in *pin*; &c. (e. g. *Tel-Abû-Qudês* = *Tel-Aboo-Koodace*). As to the consonants, *j* and *y* are pronounced as in English; *q* has about the same sound as English *c* in *cool* (not as *k* in *keel*, or *qu* in *queen*); ' is the Arabic *Ain*, the *voiced* form of the Arabic *ḥ* which may be described as a stronger variety of our *h*; *kh* is the guttural *ch* in German or Scotch *loch* (Spanish *x* or *j*); *ç* is a modification of our *s* (with an *inner rounding*) which affects the pronunciation of the following vowels (e. g. *çîn*, not = *seen*, but more like *sane*; *çâ* = *saw*, &c.). In the majority of English books of a popular character the letters *k* and *s* are used for *q* and *ç*, respectively (e. g. *el-Aksa* for *el-Aqçâ*; see *Psalms*, p. 235, l. 41).

Spelling.

English readers who object to the 'American' spelling, *honor*, &c., may be referred to HENRY SWEET'S *New English Grammar* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1892), p. xi and § 1710, &c., or to Dr. MURRAY'S remarks on the spelling of *ax* in the *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (Oxford, Clarendon Press).

Abbreviations.

The following List includes a large number of abbreviations which would not require explanation if the present Translation were for the exclusive use of American or English readers.

&c. stands for And others, or, and so forth (Lat. *et cæteri*, *cæteræ*, *cætera*, respectively).

1, 2, 3, &c., before the name of a Biblical book, stands for First Book, Second Book, Third Book, &c., respectively: 1 Kings is the First Book of Kings; 2 Sam. = the Second Book of Samuel; 3 Psalms = the Third Book of Psalms. 4 Isaiah = the fourth part of the Book of Isaiah in the present Translation, &c.

^{2}, or ^{3}, &c., after the title of a book (*e. g.* Notes on Isaiah, p. 157, l. 19), stands for second or third editions, respectively.— For D^2, E^2, &c., see D, E, &c.

^{a} stands for first part (or first line) of a verse. Subdivisions of parts of verses are indicated by ^{a} ^{b}, respec-

tively; *e. g.* **2**, $14^{a\beta}$ (*Judges*, p. 54, l. 36) refers to the second clause ($^{\beta}$) of the first part (^{a}) of the verse (*and delivered them to spoilers who despoiled them*). The first clause of the second half of the verse (*and he sold them into the power of their enemies on all sides*) would be v. $14^{b a}$.

A. D. = In the year of our Lord (Lat. *Anno Domini*).

Am. = Amos.

Ant. = Antiquities, especially the work of the Jewish historian Josephus (137–100 A. D.) on Jewish Antiquities.

ARV = Authorized and Revised Versions.

AV = Authorized Version.

AV^{M} = Authorized Version, margin.

^{b} = Second part (or second line) of a verse; see ^{a}.

Bar. = Baruch.

B. C. = Before Christ.

Bibl. = Biblical.

^{c} = Third part (or third line) of a verse; see ^{a}.

c., or C. = Chapter.

cc., or CC. = Chapters.

ca. = about (Lat. *circa*).

Cant. = Song of Solomon (*Canticles*).

cent. = Century.

cf., or *Cf.* = Compare (Lat. *confer*).

Chr., or Chron. = Chronicles.

col., or Col. = Column.

Col. = Colossians.

Cor. = Corinthians.

^{d} = Fourth part (or fourth line) of a verse; see ^{a}.

D = Deuteronomy, or the author of Deuteronomy; see Notes on Judges, p. 46, l. 15; p. 53, l. 10.

D^{2} = Deuteronomistic editors.

Dan. = Daniel.

Deut. = Deuteronomy.

E = East.

E = Ephraimitic Writer; see Notes on Judges, p. 46, l. 24.

E^{2} = Later additions to E; see Notes on Judges, p. 46, l. 40.

Eccl., or Eccles. = Ecclesiastes.

ed. = Edition.

e. g. = For example (Lat. *exempli gratiâ*).

ENE = East-North-East.

Eph. = Ephesians.

esp. = Especially.

Esth. = Esther.

Ex., or Exod. = Exodus.

Ez., or Ezek. = Ezekiel.

f. = and the following verse (or line, or page, &c.).

ff. = and the following verses (or lines, or pages, &c.).

fig., or Fig. = Figure.

Gal. = Galatians.

Gen. = Genesis.

H = The Law of Holiness (Lev. 17–26); see Notes on Leviticus, p. 56.

Hab. = Habakkuk.

Hag., or Hagg. = Haggai.

Heb. = Hebrew, or Epistle to the Hebrews.

Her. = Herodotus.

Hom. = Homer.

Hos. = Hosea.

ib., or *ibid.* = In the same place (Lat. *ibidem*).

i. e. = That is (Lat. *id est*).

Il. = Iliad.

in. = inch, or inches.

Inscr. = Inscription.

Is., or Isa. = Isaiah.

J = Judaic Writer; see Notes on Judges, p. 46, l. 23.

Jas. = James.

JE = The Prophetic Narrative of the Hexateuch, composed of J and E; see Notes on Judges, p. 46, ll. 26. 41; p. 53, l. 35.

Jer. = Jeremiah.

JHVH = the Hebrew name of the Supreme Being, erroneously written and pronounced *Jehovah*. The true pronunciation seems to have been *Yahway*; see Notes on the Psalms, p. 163, ll. 36 ff.

Jon. = Jonah.

Jos., or Josh. = Joshua.

K. = Kings.

l. or L. = Line.

ll. or LL. = Lines.

Lam. = Lamentations.

Lat. = Latin.

lb. = Pound (Lat. *libra*).

lbs. = Pounds.

l. c. = In the place before cited (Lat. *loco citato*).

Lev. = Leviticus.
lit., or Lit. = Literally.
LXX = Septuagint, the ancient Greek Version of OT, made in Egypt by Hellenistic Jews (3d–1st cent. B. C.).
M = margin. *Cf.* AV, RV.
Macc. = Maccabees.
Mal. = Malachi.
Matth. = Matthew.
Meg. = Megillah (the Heb. word for *scroll, volume*).
Mic. = Micah.
MS = Manuscript.
MSS = Manuscripts.
Mt. = Mount, or Mountain.
n. = Note.
nn. = Notes.
Nah. = Nahum.
NE = North-East.
Neh. = Nehemiah.
NNE = North-North-East.
no., or No. = Number.
nos., or Nos. = Numbers.
NT = New Testament.
Num. = The Book of Numbers.
NW = North-West.
Ob., or Obad. = Obadiah.
Od., or *Odyss.* = Odyssey.
op. cit. = In the work before cited (Lat. *opere citato*).
OT = Old Testament.
P = Priestly Writer; see Notes on Judges, p. 92, 41; *cf.* Notes on Leviticus, p. 56.
p., or P. = Page.
pp., or PP. = Pages.
Pesh. = Peshita, the earliest Syriac Version of the Old Testament.
Phil. = Philippians.
Prov. = Proverbs.
Ps. = Psalm.
Pss. = Psalms.
R = Redactor or editor.
RJE = Redactor of JE; see Notes on Judges, p. 46, ll. 26.45.
Rev. = Revelation.
Rom. = Romans.
RV = Revised Version.
RVM = Revised Version, margin.
S = South.
S., or Sam. = Samuel.
SE = South-East.
sec. = Second.
Sir. = Ecclesiasticus (The Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach).
Sol. = Solomon.
SW = South-West.
Targ. = Targum, the Jewish translation or paraphrase of the Scriptures in the Western Aramaic dialect.
Thess. = Thessalonians.
Tim. = Timothy.
Tob. = Tobit.
v., or V. = Verse.
vv., or VV. = Verses.
viz. = Namely (Lat. *videlicet*).
vol., or Vol. = Volume.
vols., or Vols. = Volumes.
Vulg. = Vulgate, the ancient Latin Version of the Bible, made by St. Jerome about 400 A. D.
W = West.
WNW = West-North-West.
WSW = West-South-West.
Zech. = Zechariah.
Zeph. = Zephaniah.

Extracts from the Preface of the Authorized Version.

In conclusion, no words of ours can so befittingly, or so eloquently, set forth the motives which have guided us, or so amply justify our Translation, as the following extracts from the Preface to the Authorized Version of 1611; three hundred years have not veiled their truth, and they encourage us to-day in tones as commanding as when the pious translators first uttered them: —

"Things of this quality have ever been subject to the censures of illmeaning and discontented persons. For was there ever any thing projected, that savored any way of newness or renewing, but the same endured many a storm of gainsaying or opposition? In some Commonweals it was made a capital crime, once to motion the making of a new law for the abrogating of an old, though the same were most pernicious. As oft as we do any thing of note or consequence, we subject ourselves to every one's censure. So hard a thing is it to please all, even when we please God best, and do seek to approve ourselves to every one's

conscience. Whosoever attempteth any thing for the public (specially if it pertain to religion, and to the opening and clearing of the word of God) the same setteth himself upon a stage to be glouted upon by every evil eye; yea, he casteth himself headlong upon pikes, to be gored by every sharp tongue. For he that meddleth with men's religion in any part meddleth with their custom, nay, with their freehold; and though they find no content in that which they have, yet they cannot abide to hear of altering.

But now what piety without truth? What truth, what saving truth, without the word of God? What word of God, whereof we may be sure, without the Scripture? The Scriptures we are commanded to search, John 5, 39; Esa. 8, 20. The Scripture is not only an armor, but also a whole armory of weapons, both offensive and defensive; it is a fountain of most pure water springing up unto everlasting life. Happy is the man that delighteth in the Scripture, and thrice happy that meditateth in it day and night.[a]

But how shall men meditate in that which they cannot understand? How shall they understand that which is kept close in an unknown tongue? Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may look into the most holy place; that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water. Indeed without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like children at *Jacob's* well (which was deep)[β] without a bucket or something to draw with; or as that person mentioned by *Esay*,[γ] to whom when a sealed book was delivered with this motion: *Read this, I pray thee*, he was fain to make this answer: *I cannot, for it is sealed.*

The godly learned were not content to have the Scriptures in the language which themselves understood, but also for the behoof and edifying of the unlearned, which hungered and thirsted after righteousness,[δ] and had souls to be saved as well as they, they provided translations into the vulgar for their countrymen. So that to have the Scriptures in the mother tongue is not a quaint conceit lately taken up, but has been thought upon, and put in practice of old, even from the first times of the conversion of any nation; no doubt because it was esteemed most profitable to cause faith to grow in men's hearts the sooner, and to make them to be able to say with the words of the Psalm:[ε] *As we have heard, so we have seen.*

Many men's mouths have been open a good while (and yet are not stopped) with speeches about the translation so long in hand, and ask what may be the reason, what the necessity, of the employment. Hath the Church been deceived, say they, all this while? We hoped that we had been in the right way, that we had had the Oracles of God delivered unto us, and that though all the world had cause to be offended, and to complain, yet that we had none. Hath the nurse holden out the breast, and nothing but wind in it? Was their translation good before, Why do they now mend it? Was it not good, Why then was it obtruded to the people? We will answer them briefly with St. *Hierome*: *Do we condemn the ancient? In no case; but after the endeavors of them that were before us, we take the best pains we can in the house of God.* Blessed be they, and most honored be their name, that break the ice, and give the onset upon that which helpeth forward to the saving of souls!

Now what can be more available thereto, than to deliver God's book unto God's people in a tongue which they understand? Since of an hidden treasure, and of a fountain that is sealed, there is no profit. As St. *Augustine* saith:

[a] Psalm 1, 2. [β] John 4, 11. [γ] Isaiah 29, 11. 12. [δ] Matth. 5, 6. [ε] Psalm 48, 8.

A man had rather be with his dog than with a stranger (whose tongue is strange to him). If we, building upon their foundation that went before us, and being holpen by their labors, do endeavor to make that better which they left so good, no man, we are sure, hath cause to mislike us; they, we persuade ourselves, if they were alive, would thank us. How many books of profane learning have been gone over again and again, by the same translators, by others? Let us bless God from the ground of our heart for working this religious care to have the translations of the Bible maturely considered of and examined. We do not deny that the very meanest translation of the Bible in *English* containeth the word of God. But to whom ever was it imputed for a fault (by such as were wise) to go over that which he had done, and to amend it where he saw cause? If we will be sons of the truth, we must consider what it speaketh, and trample upon our own credit, yea, and upon other men's too, if either be any way an hindrance to it.

To that purpose there were many chosen, that were greater in other men's eyes than in their own, and that sought the truth rather than their own praise. And in what sort did these assemble? In the trust of their own knowledge, or of their sharpness of wit, or deepness of judgment, as it were in an arm of flesh? At no hand. They trusted in Him that hath the key of David, opening, and no man shutting.[α] In this confidence, and with this devotion, did they assemble together; not too many, lest one should trouble another; and yet many, lest many things haply might escape them. If you ask what they had before them, truly it was the *Hebrew* text of the Old Testament, the *Greek* of the New. These are the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, wherethrough the olive branches empty themselves into the gold.[β]

Matters of such weight and consequence are to be speeded with maturity; for in a business of moment a man feareth not the blame of convenient slackness. Neither did we think much to consult the translators or commentators, *Chaldee*, *Hebrew*, *Syrian*, *Greek*, or *Latin*; neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us,[γ] brought the work to that pass that you see.

Some peradventure would have no variety of senses to be set in the margin, lest the authority of the Scriptures for deciding of controversies by that show of uncertainty should somewhat be shaken. But we hold their judgment not to be so sound in this point. There be many words in the Scriptures, which be never found there but once (having neither brother nor neighbor, as the *Hebrews* speak) so that we cannot be holpen by conference of places. Again, there be many rare names of certain birds, beasts, and precious stones, &c., concerning which the *Hebrews* themselves are so divided among themselves for judgment, that they may seem to have defined this or that, rather because they would say something, than because they were sure of that which they said. Now in such a case, doth not a margin do well to admonish the Reader to seek further, and not to conclude or dogmatize upon this or that peremptorily? For as it is a fault of incredulity, to doubt of those things that are evident; so to determine of such things as the Spirit of God hath left (even in the judgment of the judicious) questionable, can be no less than presumption. Diversity of signification and sense in the margin, where the text is not so clear, must needs do good; yea, is necessary, as we are persuaded.

[α] Rev. 3, 7. [β] Zech. 4, 12. [γ] Ezra 7, 9; Neh. 2, 8. 18.

Another thing we think good to admonish thee of, gentle Reader, that we have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done, because they observe, that some learned men somewhere have been as exact as they could that way. Truly, that we might not vary from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified the same thing in both places (for there be some words that be not of the same sense every where) we were especially careful, and made a conscience, according to our duty. But that we should express the same notion in the same particular word; as for example, if we translate the *Hebrew* or *Greek* word once by *purpose*, never to call it *intent*; if one where *journeying*, never *traveling*; if one where *think*, never *suppose*; if one where *pain*, never *ache*; if one where *joy*, never *gladness*, &c., thus to mince the matter, we thought to savor more of curiosity than wisdom, and that rather it would breed scorn in the atheist, than bring profit to the godly reader. For is the kingdom of God become words or syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them, if we may be free? Use one precisely, when we may use another no less fit as commodiously?

A godly Father[a] in the primitive time reporteth that he was much abused for turning *cucurbita*[b] (to which reading the people had been used) into *hedera*.[c] Now if this happen in better times, and upon so small occasions, we might justly fear hard censure, if generally we should make verbal and unnecessary changings.

We might also be charged (by scoffers) with some unequal dealing towards a great number of good *English* words. If we should say, as it were, unto certain words: Stand up higher, have a place in the Bible always; and to others of like quality: Get you hence, be banished for ever; we might be taxed peradventure with St. *James's* words, namely, *To be partial in ourselves, and judges of evil thoughts.*[d]

Lastly, we have on the one side avoided the scrupulosity of the Puritanes, who leave the old Ecclesiastical words, and betake them to other, as when they put *washing* for *baptism*, and *congregation* instead of *Church*; as also on the other side we have shunned the obscurity of the Papists, in their *azymes, tunike, rational, holocausts, præpuce, pasche*, and a number of such like. We desire that the Scripture may speak like itself, as in the language of *Canaan*, that it may be understood even of the very vulgar.

Many other things we might give thee warning of, gentle Reader, if we had not exceeded the measure of a preface already. It remaineth that we commend thee to God, and to the Spirit of His grace, which is able to build further than we can ask or think. He removeth the scales from our eyes, the veil from our hearts, opening our wits that we may understand His word, enlarging our hearts, yea, correcting our affections, that we may love it above gold and silver, yea, that we may love it to the end. Ye are brought unto fountains of living water which ye digged not; do not cast earth into them, neither prefer broken pits before them. Others have labored, and you may enter into their labors. O receive not so great things in vain. Be not like swine to tread under foot so precious things, neither yet like dogs to tear and abuse holy things. If light be come into the world, love not darkness more than light; if food, if clothing be offered, go not naked, starve not yourselves. Remember the advice, *It is a grievous thing to neglect a great fair, and to seek to make markets afterwards.* Amen."

[a] St. Jerome (about 400 A. D.). [b] gourd (Jonah 4, 6). [c] ivy. [d] Jas. 2, 4.

Judges

Conquests of the Israelite Tribes in Canaan.



AFTER *the death of Joshua*[1] the Israelites inquired 1,1
of JHVH: Who of us shall first go up to make
war on the Canaanites?[2] JHVH answered: Judah 2
shall go; I will give the land into their power.
The tribe of Judah said to their kinsmen of 3
Simeon:[3] Go with us into the territory allotted to
us, that we may make war on the Canaanites, and
then we will go with you into your territory.[4] So
the Simeonites went with them. **Then the tribe** 4
of Judah invaded the country, and JHVH delivered the Canaanites and Perizzites into their power, and they defeated them at Bezek, and killed ten thousand men. And they came upon Adoni-bezek[5] 5
at Bezek,[6] and fought with him, and defeated the Canaanites and
Perizzites.[7] Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued and took him, and 6
chopped off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek 7
said: Seventy kings, with their thumbs and great toes chopped
off, used to pick up scraps under my table; according to my
own deeds God has requited me! And they brought him to
Jerusalem, and there he died.[8] **Then the Judahites attacked Jeru-** 8
salem, and took it, putting its inhabitants to the sword, and destroying the city by fire.[9]

After this the Judahites went down to wage war on the 9
Canaanites who inhabited the Mountains, and the Negeb, and the

1, 10 **Lowlands.[10] And *Judah* went against the Canaanites who inhab-**
ited Hebron (the older name of Hebron was Kirjath-arba), and
11 **slew** Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.[11] Thence they went ‹up›
against the inhabitants of Debir (the older name of Debir was
12 Kirjath-sepher).[12] And Caleb said: I will give my daughter Achsah
in marriage to the man who attacks Kirjath-sepher and takes it.
13 Caleb's ***younger*** brother,[13] Othniel ben-Kenaz, took it; and Caleb
14 gave him his daughter Achsah in marriage. When she came to
him, ‹he› incited ‹her› to ask her father for ‹a› piece of land. So
she leaped down from her ass, and when her father asked: What
15 is the matter? she answered: Give me a present; thou hast put
me off into the Negeb; therefore give me ‹Gullath›-maim. So
Caleb gave her ‹Gullath›-illith and ‹Gullath›-tahtith.[14]

16 ○ ‹Hobab the› Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, accompanied the
Judahites from the Palm City to the wilderness of ○[] Arad ‹[*]›,
17 and went and lived with the ‹Amalekites›.[15] Then the tribe of
Judah went with their kinsmen of Simeon, and they defeated the
Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and devoted it to destruction;
18 hence the city was named Hormah.[16] **And Judah took Gaza, and**
19 **Ashkelon, and Ekron, with the districts belonging to them.[17]** JHVH
was with Judah, and the tribe conquered the Highlands, but was
not ‹able› to dispossess the inhabitants of the Plain, because the
20 latter had iron chariots.[18] Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses
21 had bidden, and Caleb drove therefrom the three giants.[19] But
the *Benjamites* did not dispossess the Jebusites who inhabited Jeru-
salem; the Jebusites live with the *Benjamites* in Jerusalem to the
present day.[20]

22 The tribes of the House of Joseph,[21] also, went up to Beth-el,
23 and JHVH was with them. As they were reconnoitering at Beth-el
24 **(the earlier name of the city was Luz)[22]** their scouts saw a man
coming out of the city, and said to him: Show us the way to
25 enter the city, and we will treat thee well. Thereupon he showed
them the way to enter the city; and they put the people of the
city to the sword, but that man and all his kin they let go;
26 and he went to the country of the Hittites, and built a town
27 which he called Luz, a name it bears to this day.[23] Manasseh
did not conquer Beth-shean with the villages belonging thereto, nor
Taanach and its villages, nor the inhabitants of Dor, nor of Ibleam,

1, 16 * which is in the Negeb

nor of Megiddo, with their villages;[24] for the Canaanites maintained 1
themselves resolutely in that region. But when Israel became 28
strong, they subjected the Canaanites to forced labor,[25] but did not
dispossess them. Nor did Ephraim dispossess the Canaanites who 29
inhabited Gezer, but the Canaanites remained in Gezer in the midst
of them.[26]

Neither did Zebulun dispossess the inhabitants of Kitron and 30
Nahalol;[27] the Canaanites dwelt in the midst of them, but had
to labor for them.[28] Asher did not dispossess the inhabitants of 31
Accho and Sidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah,
nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob;[29] the Asherites settled among the 32
Canaanite population of the region, they did not dispossess them.
Nor did Naphtali dispossess the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor 33
of Beth-anath; they dwelt among the Canaanite inhabitants of the
region, but the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath had
to labor for them.[30]

The Amorites crowded the Danites into the hill-country, and 34
did not allow them to descend to the plain; and the Amorites 35
maintained themselves resolutely in Har-heres, and Aijalon, and
Shaalbim.[31] But when the tribes of Joseph grew more powerful,
the Amorites had to labor ‹for them›.

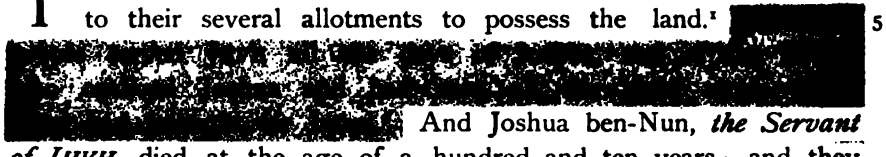
And the boundary of the ‹Edomites› ran from the Akrabbim 36
Pass ‹to› Sela and onward.[32]

And the Messenger of JHVH went up from Gilgal to ‹Beth-el›,[33] 2,1
and said:[34] * * * ‹and› I led you up from Egypt, and brought
you into the land which I swore to your forefathers that I would
give you; and I said: I will never break my covenant with you; 2
and ye, on your part, shall make no terms with the inhabitants of
this land; their altars ye shall pull down.[35] But ye have not
heeded my words; what is this that ye have done? And I also 3
said: I will not expel them before you; they shall be ‹enemies›
to you, and their gods shall be a snare to you.[36] When the 4
Messenger of JHVH uttered these words to all the Israelites the
people broke out into loud weeping; ‹hence› the place received the 5
name Bochim.[37] And they offered sacrifice there to JHVH.

History of Israel under the Judges

Introduction.

(2,6-3,6)

2,6 THEN Joshua dismissed the people, and the Israelites went
7 to their several allotments to possess the land.[1] 5

8 And Joshua ben-Nun, *the Servant*
9 *of JHVH*, died at the age of a hundred and ten years; and they
buried him within the bounds of his estate, at Timnath-heres in 10
10 the Highlands of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.[3] And that
whole generation were gathered to their fathers,[4] and there succeeded another generation, who did not know JHVH, nor the work which He had wrought for Israel.

11.12 Then the Israelites offended JHVH,[5] *and served the Baals*, and 15
forsook their fathers' God, JHVH, who had brought them up from Egypt, and followed other gods, from among the gods of the nations about them, and worshiped them, and exasperated JHVH.
13 And they forsook JHVH, and ‹burnt sacrifices› to Baal and Astarte‹›.[6]
14 And JHVH was incensed against Israel, and delivered them to 20
spoilers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the power of their enemies on all sides,[7] so that they were no longer able to
15 withstand their foes. Whenever they went to war, the hand of JHVH was against them to their hurt, as JHVH had foretold and had sworn to them that it should be;[8] and they were in great 25
16 straits. And JHVH raised up Judges, and delivered the Israelites
17 **from those who despoiled them;[9] yet they would not obey even their Judges, but went astray after other gods, and worshiped them;[10] they soon turned aside from the way in which their**
fathers had gone, who had obeyed the commandments of JHVH,— 30
18 they did not follow their fathers' example. And when JHVH raised them up Judges He would be with the Judge, and deliver them from their enemies as long as the Judge lived; for JHVH was moved to pity by their groans under those who oppressed them
19 and tyrannized over them. But when the Judge died they would 35
slide back, and act worse than their fathers, in running after other

[redacted] 2

And JHVH was incensed against Israel, and said: Inasmuch as 20
this people have transgressed the injunction which I laid upon their
fathers, and have not heeded what I said, I, on my part, will not 21
drive out for them another one of the peoples which Joshua left
when he died;[12] [redacted] 22

[redacted] So JHVH left these peoples, 23
not dispossessing them at once, *and did not give them into the power of Joshua.*[13]

[redacted] 3,1
(*namely, all those Israelites who had no experience of all the wars of Canaan*),[14] solely for the sake of ‹› the successive generations of 2
Israelites, to teach war to them[15] (*only to those who previously had no experience thereof*):[14] the five princes of the Philistines, 3
and all the Canaanites, and the Phœnicians, and the Hittites
inhabiting the Mountains of Lebanon from Mount Baal-hermon
to the Gateway of Hamath.[16] They served whereby to try Israel, to 4
know whether Israel would heed the commandments of JHVH which
He gave their fathers by Moses. So the Israelites dwelt in the 5
midst of the Canaanites, *Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites;* and took their daughters as wives, and married 6
their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods.[17]

Othniel delivers Israel from the Syrians.

THE Israelites offended JHVH, and forgot their God, JHVH, and 7
served the Baals and Asherahs.[1] And JHVH was incensed 8
against Israel, and sold them into the power of Cushan-rishathaim,
King of Syria on the Euphrates;[2] and they were subject to Cushan-
rishathaim eight years. Then the Israelites cried for help to JHVH, 9
and JHVH raised up a deliverer for the Israelites, who delivered
them, namely, Othniel ben-Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. For 10
the spirit of JHVH came upon him, and he vindicated Israel;[3] and
he went out to war, and JHVH delivered Cushan-rishathaim, King
of Syria, into his power; and his might prevailed over Cushan-
rishathaim. So the land enjoyed security for forty years.[4] 11

Ehud kills Eglon, and frees Israel from the Moabites.

3, 12 AND when Othniel ben-Kenaz died the Israelites again offended
JHVH, and JHVH enabled Eglon, King of Moab, to prevail
13 over Israel, because they had offended JHVH. He added to his
own forces the Ammonites and Amalekites,[1] and went and defeated
14 Israel, and ‹› occupied the Palm City.[2] The Israelites were subject
15 to Eglon, King of Moab, eighteen years. Then the Israelites cried
to JHVH for help, and JHVH raised them up a deliverer in Ehud
ben-Gera, a Benjamite man who had not the use of his right
hand.[3] Now the Israelites sent by him their tribute to Eglon,
16 King of Moab; and Ehud made him a two-edged dagger, more
than a foot long, which he hung under his garments on his right
17 thigh.[4] He presented the tribute to Eglon, King of Moab []; a
18 and when Ehud had finished the presentation of the tribute he
19 sent away the men who had carried the tribute;[5] but he himself
turned back at the sculptured stones near Gilgal,[6] and said: I have
a private communication for thee, O King.[7] Then the King com-
manded: Silence! and all those who stood in his presence retired.
20 And Ehud went in to him as he was sitting alone in his airy upper
story.[8] And Ehud said: I have a divine communication for thee;[9]
21 and as the King rose from his chair, Ehud reached round with
his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and
22 plunged it into the King's belly, so that the hilt went in after the
blade, and the fat closed upon the blade ‹[a]›; for he did not
23 draw the dagger out of the belly.[10] ‹› And Ehud went out to the
. . . ,[11] and closed the doors of the upper story on the
24 King.[β] After he was gone out, the King's servants came and
looked, and finding the doors of the upper story locked they said:
He must be relieving himself in the private chamber of the cool
25 story. So they waited till they perceived that they were mistaken;
and as he did not open the doors of the upper story they took
the key and opened them;[12] and there was their lord lying on the
26 ground, dead. But Ehud made his escape while they were waiting,
27 and having passed the sculptured stones escaped to Seirah.[13] When
he reached that place, he sounded the alarm in the Highlands of
Ephraim, and the Israelites came down from the Highlands with
28 him at their head. For he said: Follow me ‹down›; JHVH has

3, 17 [a] Eglon was a very fat man

24 [β] and locked them

delivered your enemies, the Moabites, into your power. So they 3
followed him down, and seized the fords of the Jordan to cut off
the Moabites, and suffered not a man to cross.[14] At that time 29
they slew of the Moabites about ten thousand, all stout and valiant
men; not one escaped. Thus Moab was subdued that day, and 30
brought under the power of Israel; and the land enjoyed security
for eighty years.

Shamgar makes a slaughter among the Philistines.

AFTER him came Shamgar ben-Anath, who killed six hundred 31
Philistines with an ox-goad. He also delivered Israel.[1]

Deborah and Barak free Israel from the Canaanites.

THE Israelites again offended JHVH when Ehud was dead; 4,1
and JHVH sold them into the power of Jabin, the King of 2
Canaan, who reigned in Hazor,[1] and had as his general Sisera,
who lived at Harosheth ha-Goyim.[2] And the Israelites cried for 3
help to JHVH; for Jabin had nine hundred iron chariots,[3] and
oppressed the Israelites cruelly for twenty years. Now a prophetess, 4
Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time,[4]
and was wont to sit under Deborah's Palm, between Ramah and 5
Beth-el in the Highlands of Ephraim,[5] whither the Israelites
resorted to her for justice. She sent and summoned Barak ben- 6
Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali;[6] and she said to him: Does not
JHVH, the God of Israel, command thee? Go, move on Mount Tabor,[7]
and take with thee ten thousand men of the tribes of Naphtali and
Zebulun. And I will draw to thee, to the Kishon Valley,[8] *Jabin's* 7
general, Sisera, with his chariots and his troops, and give him into
thy power. Barak replied: If thou wilt go with me, I will go; 8
but if thou wilt not go with me, I will not go. She answered: 9
I will certainly go with thee; howbeit thou wilt not gain the
honors of this enterprise on which thou art setting out; for JHVH
will sell Sisera into the power of a woman.[9] Thereupon Deborah
set out, and accompanied Barak to Kedesh. Then Barak called 10
out Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh, and ten thousand men
marched at his back; Deborah also went with him. Now Heber, 11

the Kenite, had separated from Kain (*from the sons of Hobab, Moses' father-in-law*), and pitched his tent as far away as the
12 Bazaanim Tree near Kedesh.[10] When Sisera was informed that
13 Barak ben-Abinoam had marched to Mount Tabor, he summoned all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots, and all the men that
14 he had, from Harosheth ha-Goyim to the Kishon Valley.[11] Then Deborah said to Barak: Arise! this is the day whereon JHVH has given Sisera into thy power; does not JHVH go out to battle at your head? So Barak descended Mount Tabor with ten thousand
15 men at his back. Then JHVH threw Sisera and all his troop of chariots and all his host into dismay at Barak's approach.[12] Sisera
16 dismounted from his chariot and fled on foot. Barak pursued the chariots and the rest of the host all the way to Harosheth ha-Goyim; and all Sisera's host were slain without quarter, not a
17 single one was left. But Sisera himself fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite;[13] *for there were friendly relations between Jabin, King of Hazor, and the family of Heber,*
18 *the Kenite.* And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him: Walk in, my lord, walk into my tent, fear not. So he went into
19 her tent, and she covered him with a ‹tent curtain›.[14] And he said to her: Give me a little water to drink, I am thirsty. So she opened the milk-skin, and gave him a draught,[15] and covered him
20 ‹again›. Then he bade her: Stand at the entrance of the tent; and if anyone come and inquire of thee: Is there anyone here? say:
21 No. Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent pin and, taking a mallet in her hand, stealthily slipped in to him, and drove the pin into his temple, so that it went through into the ground;[16] for he was
22 sound asleep and ‹wearied out›; so he died. At that moment Barak came up in pursuit of Sisera; and Jael went out to meet him, and said to him: Come, I will show thee the man thou art seeking. And he went in with her, and there was Sisera lying
23 dead, with the pin in his temple. Thus God on that day enabled
24 the Israelites to subdue Jabin, the King of Canaan. And the power of the Israelites prevailed more and more over Jabin, the King of Canaan, till they destroyed him altogether.

Song of Deborah.

5,1 THEN **Deborah sang, *with Barak ben-Abinoam,* on that day:**[1]

2 With ‹sacrifices of firstlings› in Israel,[2]
With freewill-offerings of the people, bless JHVH!



Judges *To face p. 8*

MOUNT TABOR

(*See p. 62, l. 27*)

5,3 Hear, O ye kings! give ear, O ye sovereigns!
I to JHVH will raise my song,
Will sing to JHVH, Israel's God.
4 JHVH, when from Seir Thou settest out,
When from the land of Edom Thou marchedst,
The earth trembled, the heavens ‹sway›ed,
5 The clouds dripped water, the mountains streamed,*
At the presence of JHVH, of JHVH, Israel's God.[3]

6 In the days of Shamgar ben-Anath,
In the days of Jael, ‹caravans› ceased,
And solitary travelers took ○ roundabout ways.[4]
7 ›Hamlets‹ ceased in Israel, * * ceased,
Till thou didst arise, O Deborah,
Till thou didst arise, a matron in Israel.
.
8
No shield was seen, nor spear,
Among forty thousand in Israel.[5]
9 My heart is with the rulers of Israel;
Ye who offer freely among the people, bless JHVH![6]
10 Ye who ride tawny asses,
Sit upon . . and walk in the way, ›sing‹!
11
There they rehearse the victories of JHVH,
The victories of . . . in Israel.
Then marched down to the gates the people of JHVH.[7]

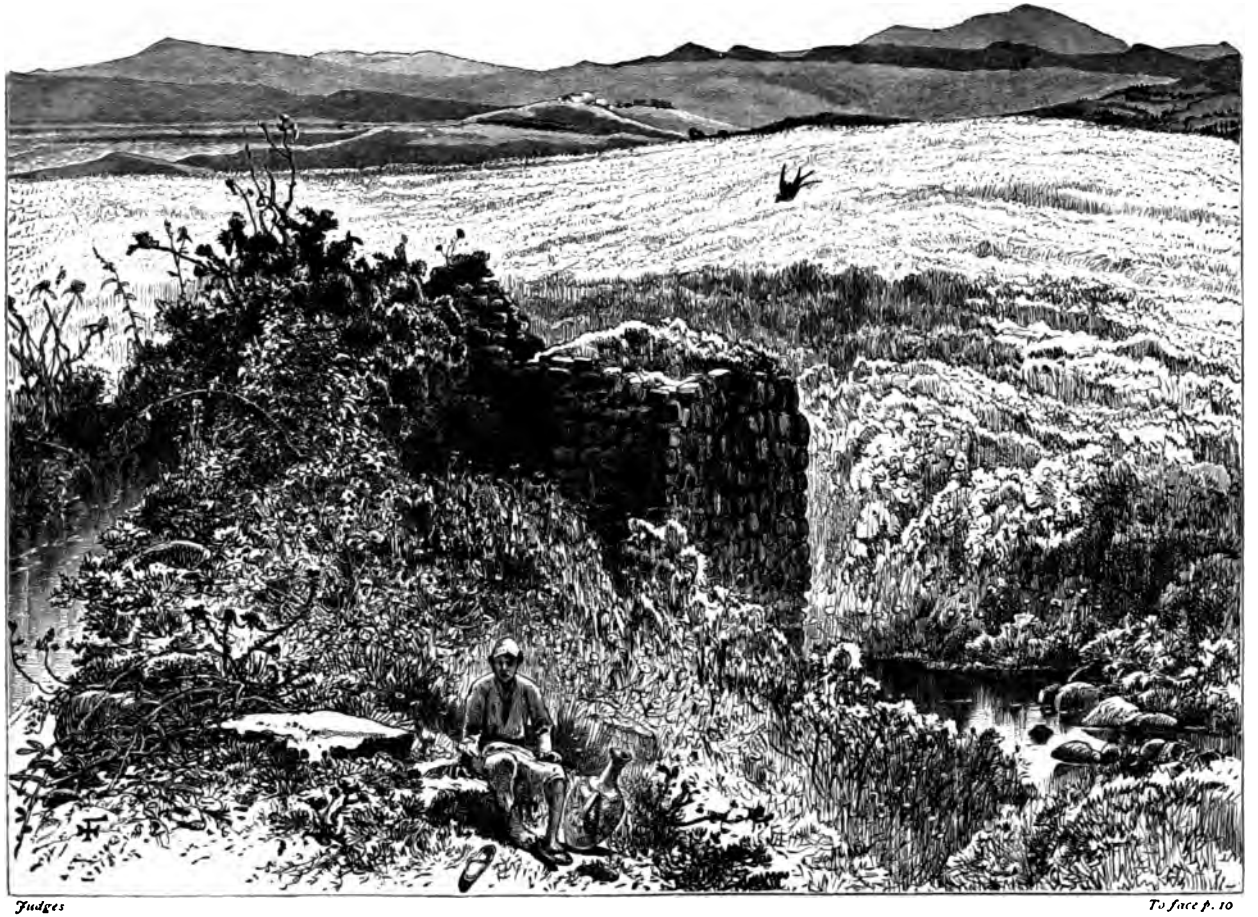
12 Awake, awake, O Deborah!
Awake, awake, lift up the song!
Arise, Barak! lead captive thy captives, son of Abinoam![8]
13 Then ‹I›sr‹ael› ‹marched down› ‹like› nobles‹;›
The people ‹of› JHVH ‹marched down› for ‹Him› as heroes.
14 . . Ephraim
. . Benjamin
From Machir came truncheon-bearers,
From Zebulun those wielding the muster-master's staff.[9]
15 And ‹the› princes ‹of› ○ Issachar with Deborah,

5,5 *that is, Sinai

5 And ‹Naphtali› . . Barak,
Into the plain was hurled at his back.[10]
15 Great were the ‹dissensions› in the divisions of Reuben.
16 Why didst thou remain amid ash-heaps,
Listening to pipings at sheep-folds? ○[11]
17 Gilead sat still, beyond Jordan;
And why does Dan go abroad in ships?
On the shore of the sea tarries Asher,
Sitting still by his places for landing.[12]
18 But Zebulun and Naphtali were tribes
That recked not of life on the battle-field's heights.[13]
19 Kings came and fought;
Then fought the Kings of Canaan,
At Taanach, by the streams of Megiddo.[14]
Gain of silver they took not!
20 From heaven ‹itself› fought the stars‹,›
From their courses they fought against Sisera.
21 The stream of Kishon swept them away,
The . . . stream, the stream of Kishon.[15]
.
22 Then ‹were battered› the hoofs of his horses,
By the galloping of his chargers.[16]

23 Curse Meroz, says the Messenger of JHVH,
Curse its inhabitants bitterly!
Because they came not to the aid of JHVH,
To the aid of JHVH like heroes.[17]
24 Blessed above all women is Jael,[a]
Above all women in tents is she blessed!
25 Water he asked, milk she gave;
Curds in a mighty bowl did she bring him.
26 Her hand ‹she puts forth› to the pin,
Her right hand to the
And smites,[β] crushes his head,
Shatters, pierces his temple.[18]
27 At her feet he sank down, he fell, he lay; ○
Where he sank he lay, of life bereft.[19]
28 Through the window peered and . .

5, 24 [a] wife of Heber, the Kenite 26 [β] Sisera



Judges *To face p. 10*

"TAANACH, BY THE STREAMS OF MEGIDDO"

(See p. 50, l. 22)

5 The mother of Sisera through the lattice:
"Why are his chariots so long in coming?
Why tarries the trampling of his horses?"[20]
29 The wisest of her princesses reply ○,
Yea, she answers her words herself:
30 "They must be finding, dividing the spoil,
A wench or two for each man,
Booty of dyed stuffs for Sisera, ○
A piece of embroidery ○ or two for the neck of . . "—
31 So perish Thine enemies all, O JHVH!
But be ‹Thy› friends as the sun when he rises in power.[21]

Then the land enjoyed security for forty years.

Gideon frees Israel from the Midianites.

6,1 THE Israelites offended JHVH, and JHVH delivered them
2 Midian for seven years.[1] The power of Midian prevailed over
Israel; for safety from Midian the Israelites made themselves
3 hiding-places[a] in the mountains, and caves, and fastnesses; for
when Israel had sowed, Midian, and Amalek, and the Eastern
4 ‹Bedouins› would come up;[3] and they came up against Israel, and
encamped upon their land, and destroyed the crops, as far as the
region about Gaza; they left nothing in Israel to live on, neither
5 sheep, nor an ox, nor an ass.[4] For they themselves and their
flocks would come up, with their tents, and come in like locusts in
number; they and their camels were innumerable; and they invaded
6 the land to its ruin; and Israel was brought very low by reason
7 of Midian. Then the Israelites cried for help to JHVH. And when
8 the Israelites cried to JHVH on account of Midian, JHVH sent a
prophet to the Israelites, who thus addressed them:[5] Thus says
JHVH, the God of Israel: It was I who brought you up from
9 Egypt, out of the place where ye were slaves; and I delivered
you from the Egyptians and from all who oppressed you; and I
10 enabled you to drive them out, and gave you their land.[6] And I
said to you: I am JHVH, your God; ye shall not fear the gods of
the Amorites in whose land ye dwell; but ye have not heeded
my words.

6,11 Then the Messenger of JHVH came, and sat down under the
holy tree in Ophrah (which belonged to Joash, the Abi-ezrite[7]), when
Gideon, the son of Joash, was beating out wheat in the wine-press
12 to escape the notice of Midian.[8] And the Messenger of JHVH
appeared to Gideon, and said to him: JHVH is with thee, thou
13 mighty hero![9] Gideon answered: I pray, sir, if JHVH be indeed
with us, why has all this befallen us? **Where are all His miracles
whereof our fathers told us, saying: Did not JHVH bring us up
from Egypt?**[10] But now JHVH has cast us off, and surrendered us
14 to Midian. ***Then JHVH faced him,*** and said:[11] Go, in this might of
15 thine, and deliver Israel from Midian; ***do not I send thee?***[12] But
he replied: I pray, sir, how should I deliver Israel? My sept is
16 the poorest in Manasseh, and I the least in my family.[13] ***JHVH***
answered: Surely, ***I*** will be with thee,[14] and thou shalt strike down
17 the Midianites as one man. And he said: If Thou wilt do me a
favor, ***give me a sign that ‹it is› Thou ‹who› speakest with me;***[15]
18 do not move from this spot till I come to Thee and bring out ***my
offering*** and set it before Thee. He replied: I will stay till thy
19 return. So Gideon went and prepared a kid, and an ephah of
flour made into unleavened cakes;[16] the meat he put in a basket,
and the broth in a pot, and brought it to the Messenger under the
20 tree, **and presented it to him. The Messenger of ‹JHVH› bade him:
Take the meat and the cakes, and put them down on this rock,
21 and pour out the broth.**[17] **When Gideon had done so,** the Mes-
senger of JHVH reached out the staff which he had in his hand,
and with the tip touched the meat and the cakes; and fire came up
from the stone, and consumed the meat and the cakes. ***Then the
22 Messenger of JHVH passed from his sight.***[18] When Gideon per-
ceived that it was the Messenger of JHVH, he exclaimed: Oh, Lord
23 JHVH! I have seen the Messenger of JHVH face to face![19] But
JHVH said to him: Thou art safe; fear not, thou shalt not die.
24 Then Gideon built there an altar to JHVH, which he named JHVH-
shalom; it is standing to this day at Ophrah in Abi-ezer.[20]

25 That night JHVH said to him: Take ‹the fat› bullock belonging
to thy father,[21], and pull down the altar of Baal which
belongs to thy father, and cut down the sacred pole which stands
26 beside it,[22] and build an altar to JHVH, thy God, on the top of this
stronghold; and take the ‹fat› bullock, and offer it as a
burnt-offering, using the wood of the sacred pole which thou art to
27 cut down. So Gideon took ten of his servants, and did as JHVH
bade him; but since he feared to do it by day, on account of his

father's family and the men of the town, he did it by night. When 6,28
the men of the town rose up in the morning, they found the altar of
Baal pulled down, and the sacred pole that stood beside it cut down,
and the ‹fat› bullock offered on the new altar which had been built.
The townsmen therefore inquired of one another: Who has done 29
this? And when they found by inquiry that Gideon ben-Joash had
done it, the townsmen demanded of Joash: Bring out thy son, 30
that he may die; for he has pulled down the altar of Baal, and
cut down the sacred pole that stood beside it. But Joash answered 31
all who thus assailed him: Will ye take up Baal's quarrel?—will
ye vindicate him? *Whoever takes up Baal's quarrel shall be put
to death by morning.*[23] If ‹Baal› be a god, let him take his own
part.[24]* Thus Gideon got that day the name Jerubbaal, that is 32
to say, 'Let Baal contend with him,'[25] *because he pulled down
‹Baal's› altar.*

Now all Midian, and Amalek, and the Eastern ‹Bedouins› **had** 33
**gathered together, and crossed ‹the Jordan›, and encamped on the
Plain of Jezreel.**[26] And the spirit of JHVH possessed Gideon,[27] and 34
he sounded the alarm, and ‹the men of› Abi-ezer were called out
to follow him. He sent messengers also through all Manasseh, and 35
they, too, were called out to follow him; *he sent messengers also
through Asher, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they marched to
meet them.*[28]

[29]Then Gideon said to God: If Thou wilt really deliver Israel 36
by my hand, as Thou sayest, I am going to put a fleece of wool 37
**on the threshing-floor; if there be dew on the fleece alone, while
all the ground is dry, I shall know that Thou wilt deliver Israel
by my hand, as Thou sayest. And so it was: in the morning he** 38
**rose, and squeezed the fleece, and wrung dew out of the fleece, a
bowlful of water. And Gideon said to God: Be not angry with** 39
**me; *let me speak this once more;*[30] let me make trial with the
fleece only this once more. Now let only the fleece be dry, and
let there be dew on all the ground. And God did so that night;** 40
the fleece only was dry, while there was dew on all the ground.

Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with 7,1
him set out in the morning, and encamped near En-harod; the camp
of Midian was ‹› north ‹of› Gibeah ha-moreh.‹›[31] Then JHVH said 2
to Gideon: The people who are with thee are too many for me

6,31 *because he pulled down his altar

7 to give Midian into their power; lest Israel vaunt itself against me,
3 saying: I wrought deliverance for myself.[32] So now make proc-
lamation to the people: Whoever is fearful and timid shall turn
back and[33] In consequence, twenty-two thousand of
4 them returned; but ten thousand remained. Then JHVH said to 5
Gideon: The people are still too many; lead them down to the
water, that I may separate them for thee there; every one of those
of whom I say to thee: He shall go with thee, shall go with thee;
and every one of those of whom I say to thee: He shall not go
5 with thee, shall not go. So he led the people down to the water; 10
and JHVH said to Gideon: All those who lap water with their tongues,
as a dog laps, thou shalt set by themselves; and all those who
6 kneel down to drink ‹shalt thou set by themselves›.[34] And the
number of those who lapped [] amounted to three hundred; all the
7 rest of the people knelt down to drink water. ‹[*]› And JHVH said 15
to Gideon: By the three hundred men who lapped I will deliver
you, and will give Midian into thy power; all the rest of the
8 people shall return whence they came. So they took the ‹jars› of
the people in their hands, and their horns; and ‹Gideon› dismissed
to their homes all the levy of Israel, but kept the three hundred 20
men.[35] Now he had the camp of Midian below him in the plain.
9 That night JHVH said to him: Arise! descend on the camp,
10 I deliver it over to thee. And if thou fearest to descend on it, go
11 down thyself to the camp, with Phurah, thy page, and hear what
they say; thereafter thou wilt have courage to descend on the 25
camp. So he went down with Phurah, his page, to the outermost
12 of the armed men who were in the camp. Now Midian, and
Amalek, and all the Eastern ‹Bedouins› were lying in the plain, like
locusts in number, and their camels were innumerable, like the sand
13 on the sea-shore in number.[36] Just as Gideon reached ‹the camp›, 30
a man was telling his comrade a dream, saying: I dreamed that
a cake of barley griddle-bread[37] was rolling hither and thither
through the camp of Midian; and it came to the tent, and struck
14 it,[a] and turned it upside down.[b] His comrade answered: This
means nothing else than *the sword of Gideon ben-Joash,* the men 35
of Israel: God has given into their power *Midian and* all the
15 camp.[38] When Gideon heard the dream repeated and interpreted,
he bowed in adoration; and returning to the camp of Israel, said:
Arise! JHVH has delivered the camp of Midian into your power.

7,6 [a] with their hands to their mouth 13 [a] and it fell [b] and the tent fell

Then he divided his three hundred men into three companies, 7,16
and furnished them all with horns, and empty jars, and torches in
the jars; and said to them: Ye must watch me, and do as I 17
do; **when I come to the edge of the camp, ye must do just what**
I do; and when I and all those who are with me give a blast 18
on the horn, then ye also must blow your horns all about the
camp, *and say: For JHVH and Gideon!* **Now Gideon and ‹the›** 19
hundred men who were with him reached the edge of the camp
at the beginning of the middle watch[39] (the guards had just been
posted), and they blew their horns, *and broke the jars they held*
in their hands. **Then the three companies blew their horns,** and 20
shattered the jars, grasping *with their left hands* the torches, *and*
with their right hands the horns to blow withal, and shouted:
○ For JHVH and Gideon! And they stood where they were, about 21
the camp; and all the camp ‹awoke›, and sent up a wild cry, and
fled. *And ‹the› three hundred blew their horns;* **and JHVH set every** 22
man's sword against his comrade ○ throughout the whole camp, and
the camp fled to Beth-shittah, to Zere‹d›ah, to ‹the brink of› Abel-
meholah near Tabbath.[40] **And the men of Israel were called out** 23
from *Naphtali, and Asher, and* **all Manasseh, and pursued Midian.[41]**
Gideon also sent messengers through all the Highlands of Ephraim, 24
saying: Come down to meet Midian, and hold the streams against
them as far as Beth-barah, *and the Jordan;*[42] **so all the men of**
Ephraim were called out, and held the streams as far as Beth-
barah, *and the Jordan.* **And they took the two chiefs of Midian,** 25
Oreb and Zeeb, and slew Oreb at Oreb's Rock and Zeeb at Zeeb's
Press;[43] *and they pursued ○ Midian, and brought the heads of*
Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.[44]

Then the Ephraimites said to ‹Gideon›: What trick is this thou 8,1
hast played us, not to summon us when thou wentest to fight with
Midian? And they found fault with him angrily.[45] But he answered 2
them: What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not
Ephraim's gleaning better than Abi-ezer's vintage? Into your hands 3
God has given Oreb and Zeeb, the chiefs of Midian; What have
I been able to do in comparison with what ye have done? By
this speech their anger against him was appeased.

Gideon came to the Jordan,* he and the three hundred men 4
whom he had with him, faint from hunger, yet in full pursuit.

8,4 *crossing

8,5 And he said to the inhabitants of Succoth:[46] Give loaves of bread
to the men who are following me; for they are faint; I am
6 pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the Kings of Midian.[47] But the
magistrates of Succoth answered: Are Zebah and Zalmunna already
7 in thy power, that we should give thy soldiers bread? Then
Gideon said: When JHVH gives Zebah and Zalmunna into my
power, I will trample your bodies on ‹a bed of› thorns of the desert
and of knapweed.[54]
8 Thence ‹Gideon› went up to Penuel,[48] and made the same
request of them; but the inhabitants of Penuel answered him as
9 those of Succoth had answered. Then he threatened the inhabi-
tants of Penuel: When I return successful, I will pull down this
tower.[49]
10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna were at Karkor,[50] and their horde
with them, about fifteen thousand men—**all that were left of all the**
hordes of the Eastern ‹Bedouins›; but the slain were a hundred and
11 **twenty thousand fighting men.** And Gideon went up by the way
. . . , east of Nobah and Jogbehah,[51] and attacked the camp
12 as it lay in security. Zebah and Zalmunna fled; but he pursued
them, and caught both the Kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna;
13 and scattered all the horde.[52] Then Gideon ben-Joash returned
14 from the war, . . .[53] And he captured a boy of the inhabitants
of Succoth, and questioned him, and the boy gave him a list of
the Magistrates of Succoth, and of its Elders, seventy-seven men.
15 So he came to the people of Succoth, and said: See, here are Zebah
and Zalmunna concerning whom ye taunted me, saying: Are
Zebah and Zalmunna already in thy power, that we should give
16 bread to thy famishing men? Then he took ***the Elders of the***
city, and taking thorns of the desert and knapweed, ‹trampled
17 thereon the men of Succoth.[54] He also pulled down the tower
18 of Penuel, and killed the inhabitants of the town. Then he
demanded of Zebah and Zalmunna: ‹Who, then›, were the men
whom ye killed at Tabor?[55] They answered: They were just like
19 thee; in stature like king's sons, ‹every› one. He exclaimed: They
were my brothers, my own mother's sons! By JHVH, if ye had spared
20 their lives, I would not have killed you![56] And he bade Jether,
his eldest son: Arise! kill them! But the boy did not draw his
21 sword; he was afraid, being still but a boy. Zebah and Zalmunna
said: Arise thyself, and fall on us; a man has a man's strength.
Then Gideon himself arose, and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and
took the crescents that were on the necks of their camels.[57]

The men of Israel said to Gideon: Rule over us, thou, and 8,22
thy son, and thy son's son; for thou hast delivered us from the
power of Midian. But Gideon replied: I will not rule over you, 23
nor shall my son rule over you; JHVH shall rule over you.[58]
And Gideon said to them: I will ask one thing of you:[59] 24
every man give me the ear-ring that he has taken from the spoil,
(they had golden rings, for they were Ishmaelites).[60] They 25
answered: We will gladly give them. So he spread out his
mantle, and every man threw down on it the ring that he had
taken from the spoil. And the weight of the golden rings for which 26
he had asked was seventeen hundred shekels of gold;[61] not including
the crescents and pendants, *and the purple garments which the
Kings of Midian wore, nor the necklaces which were on the necks
of their camels.*[62] And Gideon made it into an Ephod-idol, and set 27
it up in his native town, Ophrah;[63] **and all Israel went astray after
it there; and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family.[64]
Thus the Midianites were subdued by the Israelites, and did not 28
lift their heads again; and the land enjoyed security for forty years
in the days of Gideon.**

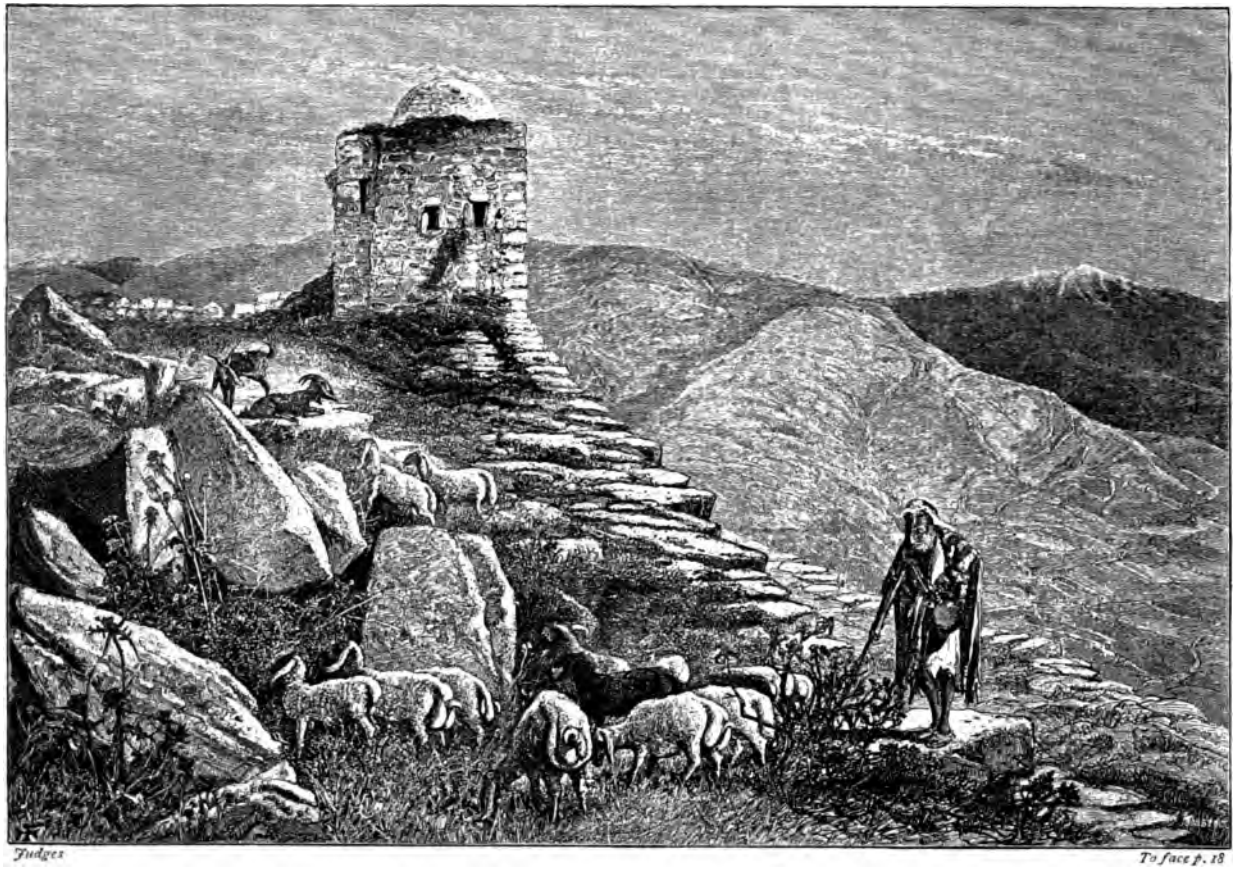
So Jerubbaal ben-Joash went, and dwelt in his home.[65] Now 29.30
Gideon had seventy sons, all begotten by him, for he had many
wives. And his concubine also, who lived in Shechem, bore him 31
a son, whom he named Abimelech.[66] Then Gideon ben-Joash died 32
at a hoar old age, and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash,
in Ophrah.[a] **But as soon as Gideon was dead the Israelites 33
relapsed, and went astray after the Baals, and established Baal-
berith as their god.[67] The Israelites did not remember their God, 34
JHVH, who had rescued them from the power of all the enemies
who encompassed them;[68] nor did they deal as well by the family 35
of Jerubbaal[β] as all the good that he had done to Israel deserved.**

History of Abimelech, King of Shechem.

**ABIMELECH ben-Jerubbaal went to Shechem to his mother's 9,1
kinsmen, and spoke to them and to the whole clan to which
his mother's family belonged, saying: Put this question to all the 2
citizens of Shechem: Which is better for you? that seventy men
should rule over you—all these sons of Jerubbaal—or that one
man should rule over you? And remember that I am your own**

8,32 [a] of Abi-ezer 35 [β] Gideon

9,3 flesh and blood.[1] So his mother's kinsmen spoke in his behalf to
all the citizens of Shechem, repeating what he had said, and the
citizens were persuaded to follow Abimelech; for they said: He is
4 our kinsman. And they gave him seventy shekels of silver from
the temple of Baal-berith;[2] with this money Abimelech hired a band
5 of worthless and reckless followers. Then he went to his father's
home at Ophrah, and killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal,
seventy men, on one stone;[3] there was left only Jotham, Jerubbaal's
6 youngest son, who had hidden himself. And all the citizens of
Shechem and all Beth-millo[4] assembled, and went and made Abi-
7 melech king, by the ‹monument›-tree which was in Shechem. When
Jotham was told of this, he went and stood on the top of Mount
Gerizim, and shouted to them:[5] Hearken to me, ye citizens of
8 Shechem, as ye hope that God will hearken to you.—Once upon a
time the trees went about to anoint a king over them. And they
9 said to the olive: Reign thou over us! But the olive answered:
Shall I leave off my fatness, ‹where›with gods and men ‹are› hon-
10 or‹ed›, and come to hold sway over the trees? Then the trees said
11 to the fig: Come thou, reign over us! But the fig answered: Shall
I leave off my sweetness and fine crop of fruit, and come to hold
12 sway over the trees? Then the trees said to the vine: Come
13 thou, reign over us! But the vine answered: Shall I leave off my
juice, which gladdens gods and men, and come to hold sway
14 over the trees? Then all the trees said to the box-thorn: Come
15 thou, reign over us! And the thorn answered the trees: If in
good faith ye are anointing me king over you, come, take refuge
in my shade; but if not, fire shall go forth from the thorn, and
16 devour the cedars of Lebanon![6] And now, if ye have acted in
good faith and honor in making Abimelech king, and if ye have
dealt well by Jerubbaal and his family, and requited him as he
17 deserved, seeing that my father fought for you, and ventured his
18 life, and rescued you from Midian, albeit ye are to-day risen up
against my father's family, and have slain his sons, seventy men
on one stone, and made Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant,
19 king over the citizens of Shechem, because he was your kinsman,—
if, I say, ye have acted in good faith and honor toward Jerubbaal
and his family this day,[7] I wish you joy of Abimelech, and I wish
20 him joy of you; but if not, may fire come forth from Abimelech,
and devour the citizens of Shechem and Beth-millo; and fire go
forth from the citizens of Shechem and Beth-millo, and devour
21 Abimelech![8] Then Jotham took to flight, and went to Beer,[9] and
dwelt there, to be out of the reach of his brother Abimelech.



Judges

To face p. 18

TOP OF MOUNT GERIZIM

(See p. 73, l. 17)

After Abimelech had ruled over *Israel* three years[20] God sent 9,22.23
a spirit of discord between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem,[21]
and the citizens of Shechem played Abimelech false; that the 24
murder of the seventy sons of Jerubbaal and that their blood
might come[α] upon their brother Abimelech, who killed them, and
upon the citizens of Shechem, who enabled him so to kill his
brothers.[22] And the citizens of Shechem put men in ambush on 25
the hill-tops, and robbed all who passed on the road through their
country; and this was told Abimelech.[23]
And Gaal ben-‹O›bed and his kinsmen came and moved into 26
Shechem; and the citizens of Shechem put confidence in him.[24]
And they went out into the country, and gathered the grapes 27
from their vineyards, and trod them; and they made festivities, and
went to the temple of their god, and ate and drank, and cursed
Abimelech.[25] And Gaal ben-‹O›bed said: Who is ‹this› Abimelech? 28
and who are the Shechemites, that we should serve him? ‹Were› not
this son of Jerubbaal, and Zebul, his lieutenant, ‹subjects› of the
family of Hamor?[β] Why, then, should we serve him?[26] Would that 29
I had the leading of this people, I would get rid of Abimelech! ‹I
would say› to Abimelech: Recruit your army, and come out!
When Zebul, the governor of the city,[27] heard what Gaal ben- 30
‹O›bed said, he was angry, and sent messengers to Abimelech ‹at 31
Arumah›,[28] saying: Gaal ben-‹O›bed and his kinsmen are coming
to Shechem, and are ‹stirring up› the city against thee. Now, 32
therefore, set out by night with the men thou hast with thee,
and lie concealed in the fields; and in the morning at sunrise 33
thou must get up and march forth against the city; and when he
and the men who are with him go out to meet thee, thou must
do to him as the occasion serves.
So Abimelech and all the men he had with him set out by 34
night, and lay in ambush against Shechem in four companies.
And Gaal ben-‹O›bed came out and stood at the entrance of the 35
city gate, as Abimelech and the men who were with him rose
from their place of concealment. When Gaal saw the troops, he said 36
to Zebul: See, there is a body of men coming down from the
mountain tops. Zebul replied: It is the shadow of the mountains
which thou takest for men. But Gaal spoke again: There are men 37
coming down from the Navel of the Land, and one body is coming

9,24 [α] to put it

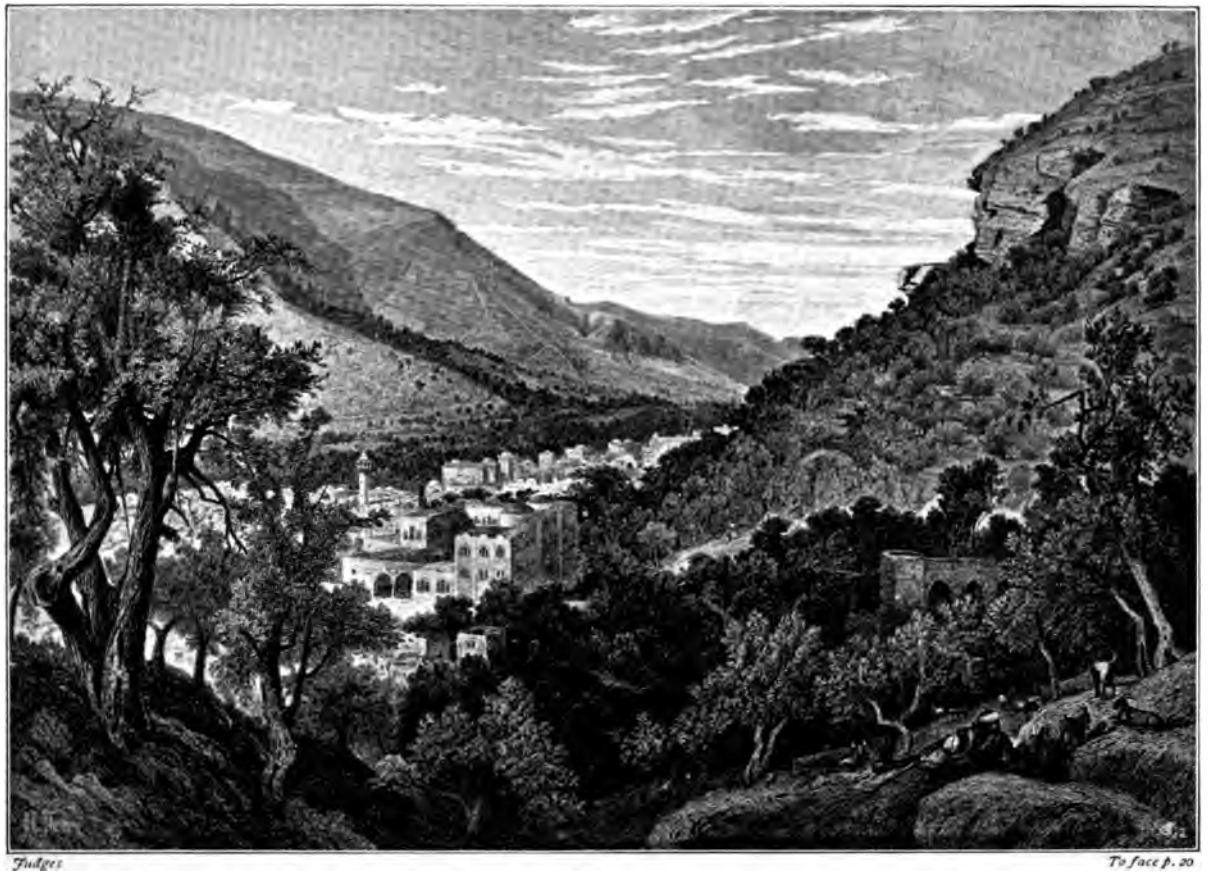
28 [β] the father of Shechem

9,38 by the road from the Meonenim Tree.[19] Then Zebul said to
him: What is become of thy boastful words when thou saidst:
Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him? Are not these the
men whom thou didst so despise? March out now, and fight with
39 them! And Gaal marched out at the head of the citizens of
40 Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. And Abimelech pursued
him, and he fled before Abimelech; and many fell slain, even to
41 the entrance of the gate. And Abimelech ‹returned, and› dwelt at
Arumah; but Zebul drove out Gaal and his kinsmen, that they
should no longer live in Shechem.[20]

42 **On the following day the people went out into the country;**
43 **and Abimelech was informed of it.[21] So he took his men, and**
divided them into three bodies, and lay in ambush in the open
country; and when he saw the people coming out of the city, he
44 **rose against them and attacked them. Abimelech and the com-**
pan‹y› that was with him made a dash, and stood at the entrance
of the city gate; while the two other companies rushed upon all
45 **those who were in the fields, and slew them. And Abimelech**
fought against the city all that day, and took the city, and slew
the people who were in it, and razed the city, and sowed the site
with salt.[22]

46 **When all the citizens of the Tower of Shechem heard of it,**
47 **they went into the ‹crypt› of the temple of El-berith;[23] and it was**
told Abimelech that all the citizens of the Tower of Shechem were
48 **gathered there. So Abimelech and all the men who were with**
him went up on Mount Zalmon, and Abimelech took ‹his› ax‹e› in
his hand, and cut brushwood, and took it up and put it on his
shoulder, and said to the men who were with him: Make haste,
49 **and do what ye have seen me do. Then all the people cut their**
brushwood, and followed Abimelech, and put it upon the ‹crypt›;
and set fire to the ‹crypt› over the heads of those who were in it.
Thus died also all the inhabitants of the Tower of Shechem, about
a thousand men and women.

50 **And Abimelech went to Thebez, and encamped against it, and**
51 **took it.[24] Now there was a donjon-tower within the city; thither**
all the men and women fled, ‹› all the citizens of the town, and
closed it after them, and went up on the roof of the tower.
52 Abimelech came to the tower, and attacked it; and as he drew
53 near to the door of the tower, to burn it, a certain woman threw
an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, shattering his skull.[25]
54 And he called quickly to his attendant armor-bearer, and bade



Fudges *To face p. 20*

SHECHEM

(See p. 72, l. 43)

him: Draw thy sword, and kill me, lest men say: A woman slew 9
him. So his page ran him through, and he died.[26] And when the 55
Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead they dispersed to their
homes.

Thus God brought home to Abimelech the crime which he 56
committed against his father in murdering his seventy brothers;
and all the crime of the men of Shechem was brought upon their 57
own heads; the curse of Jotham ben-Jerubbaal came true to them.[27]

The Judges Tola and Jair.

AFTER Abimelech there arose to deliver Israel Tola ben-Puah 10,1
ben-Dodo, a man of Issachar, who dwelt at Shamir in the
Highlands of Ephraim. He judged Israel twenty-three years; then 2
he died, and was buried at Shamir.[1]

After him arose Jair, the Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty- 3
two years. He had thirty sons, *who rode on thirty asses;* and 4
they had thirty towns called Havoth-jair to this day, in the land
of Gilead.[2] And Jair died, and was buried at Camon. 5

Introduction to the History of the Oppression of Israel

by the Ammonites and Philistines.

AND the Israelites again offended JHVH, and served the Baals 6
and the Astartes, *and the gods of Syria, and of Phœnicia,*
and of Moab, and of the Ammonites, and of the Philistines,[1] and
forsook JHVH, and did not serve Him. And JHVH was incensed 7
against Israel, and sold them into the power of the Philistines and
into the power of the Ammonites.[2] And they crushed ‹› the 8
Israelites that year, *eighteen years,*[3] all the Israelites who were
across the Jordan in the land of the Amorites who were in Gilead.
And the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to make war also upon 9
Judah[4] and Benjamin, and upon the tribe of Ephraim; and Israel
was in great straits. Then the Israelites cried to JHVH for help, 10
saying: We have sinned against Thee,[5] ‹› in that we have forsaken
our God, ‹JHVH›, and served the Baals. And JHVH answered the 11
Israelites: Did not ‹› the Egyptians, and ‹› the Amorites, and ‹› the
Ammonites, and ‹› the Philistines, and the Phœnicians, and the 12

10 Amalekites, and the ‹Midianites› oppress you; and when ye cried
13 to me for help I delivered you from their power?[6] But ye, on
your part, have forsaken me, and served other gods; therefore I
14 will not deliver you again. Go and cry to the gods whom ye have
15 chosen; let them deliver you in your time of distress![7] And the
Israelites replied to JHVH: We have sinned; do Thou to us what-
16 ever Thou wilt; only save us to-day![8] Then they put away the
foreign gods from among them, and served JHVH;[9] and He could
17 bear the misery of Israel no longer. Now the Ammonites were
called out, and encamped in Gilead, and the Israelites were
18 assembled, and encamped at Mizpah. And the people* said one
to another: Who is the man that will begin the war with the
Ammonites? He shall be head of all the inhabitants of Gilead.[10]

Jephthah delivers Gilead from the Ammonites.

11, 1 NOW Jephthah, the Gileadite, was a great warrior; he was the
2 son of a harlot; *Gilead begot Jephthah. Gilead's wife also
bore him sons; and when the wife's sons grew up, they thrust
Jephthah out, and said to him: Thou shalt not inherit in our
3 father's house, for thou art the son of another woman.*[1] So
Jephthah fled from his brothers, and dwelt in the land of Tob;
and there gathered about him worthless fellows, who went out with
4 him on forays.[2] After a time, the Ammonites made war with Israel.[3]
5 And when the Ammonites made war with Israel,[4] the Elders of
6 Gilead came to bring Jephthah back from the land of Tob, and said
to Jephthah: Come and be our commander, and let us fight against
7 the Ammonites. But Jephthah answered the Elders of Gilead: Are
not ye the men who hated me, and thrust me out of my father's
house? Why then do ye come to me now, when ye are in straits?[5]
8 And the Elders of Gilead replied to Jephthah: Therefore have we
now returned to thee;[6] and if thou wilt go with us and fight
against the Ammonites, thou shalt be our chief, of all the inhabitants
9 of Gilead. Then Jephthah said to the Elders of Gilead: If ye
take me back to fight against the Ammonites, and JHVH gives
10 them over to me, I shall be your chief.[7] And the Elders of
Gilead answered Jephthah: JHVH shall be witness to what has
passed between us; we swear that we will do just as thou sayest.

10, 18 *the chiefs of Gilead

Then Jephthah went with the Elders of Gilead, and the people made him chief and commander over them.[8] And Jephthah uttered all his words before JHVH at Mizpah.[9] XI, 11

And Jephthah sent messengers to the King of the Ammonites 12
to say: What is there between us, that thou art come to war
upon my country?[10] The King of the Ammonites replied to Jeph- 13
thah's messengers: It is because Israel, when it came up from
Egypt, took my territory, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, and ⁺west⁺
to the Jordan;[11] now, therefore, restore ‹it› peaceably. Jephthah a 14
second time sent messengers to the King of the Ammonites, and 15
said to him: Thus says Jephthah: "Israel did not take the territory
of Moab or the territory of the Ammonites;[12] for when they 16
came up from Egypt, Israel passed through the desert as far as
the Red Sea,[13] and came to Kadesh. Then Israel sent messengers to 17
the King of Edom, saying: Let me pass, I pray thee, through thy
land; but the King of Edom would not hearken to it;[14] they sent
also to the King of Moab, and he refused;[15] so Israel remained
at Kadesh. Then they went through the desert, and made a circuit 18
about the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and came up on
the east of the land of Moab, and encamped on the opposite side
of the Arnon, but did not enter the borders of Moab (for the
Arnon was the boundary of Moab).[16] Thence Israel sent mes- 19
sengers to Sihon, King of the Amorites, King of Heshbon;
and Israel requested of him: Let me pass, I pray thee, through
thy land, to my place.[17] But Sihon ‹refused› ‹to allow› Israel 20
to pass through his borders; he collected all his people, and
encamped at Jahaz, and made war with Israel.[18] But JHVH, 21
the God of Israel, delivered Sihon and all his people into the
power of Israel, and Israel defeated them, and took possession of
all the land of the Amorites who inhabited that region. Thus they 22
got possession of all the territory of the Amorites from the Arnon
to the Jabbok, and from the desert to the Jordan.[19] Thus JHVH, 23
the God of Israel, dispossessed the Amorites to give their land to
His people, Israel; and shalt thou possess ⁺the land⁺? Shouldst not 24
thou possess ⁺the territory of⁺ those whom Chemosh, thy god, dis-
possesses ○, and we possess that of all those whom JHVH, our
God, dispossesses for us?[20] Art thou so much better than the 25
King of Moab, Balak ben-Zippor? Did he have any contention
with Israel, or did he ever go to war against them?[21] When
Israel dwelt in Heshbon and the villages belonging thereto, and in 26
‹Jaazer› and the villages belonging thereto, and in all the towns

11 which are along the ‹Jordan›, for three hundred years, why didst
27 ‹thou› not reclaim ‹them› during that time?[23] I have committed
no fault against thee; but thou art doing me a wrong in making
war upon me; let JHVH, who is arbiter this day, decide between
28 Israelites and Ammonites."—But the King of the Ammonites would
not hearken to the message which Jephthah sent him.

29 ***Then the spirit of JHVH came upon Jephthah, and he passed over to Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over to Mizpeh in*** *Gilead, and from Mizpeh in Gilead he passed over ‹to› the Ammo-*
30 *nites.*[23] And Jephthah made a vow to JHVH: If Thou wilt give
31 the Ammonites completely into my power, whosoever it may be
that comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I
return successful from the Ammonites shall be JHVH's; I will
32 offer him as a burnt-offering.[24] Then Jephthah passed over to the
Ammonites to make war on them, and JHVH gave them into his
33 power, and he smote them from Aroer till you come to Minnith,
twenty cities, and even to Abel-cheramim, with very great slaughter;[25]
and the Ammonites were subdued by the Israelites.

34 And when Jephthah came to Mizpah, to his home,[26] his
daughter came out to meet him, with tabrets and dances;[27] she
was his only child, beside ‹her› he had neither son nor daughter.
35 And when he saw her he rent his garments, and exclaimed: Oh,
my daughter! thou hast stricken me! thou, thou art become my
ruin! But I have given a solemn promise to JHVH, and cannot
36 go back. She answered: My father, thou hast spoken a solemn
word to JHVH; do to me what thou hast vowed, forasmuch as
JHVH has wrought for thee vengeance on thy foes, the Ammonites.
37 And she said to her father: Let this be done for me: grant me a
respite of two months, that I may depart and go down to the
mountains, and weep with my companions, because of my maiden-
38 hood. And he bade her go, and sent her away for two months;
so she went, with her companions, and wept on the mountains,
39 because of her maidenhood. And at the end of two months she
returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed to
do; and man had never approached her.[28] Thus it became a
40 custom in Israel: yearly the Israelitish maidens go to lament four
days in the year for the daughter of Jephthah, the Gileadite.

12, 1 The Ephraimites were called out, and crossed to Zaphon; and
they said to Jephthah: Why didst thou go over to attack the
Ammonites, and didst not summon us to go with thee? We will

burn thy house over thy head.[29] But Jephthah replied: I and my 12, 2
people were engaged in a contest, and the Ammonites ‹oppressed
us› sorely; and when I called ‹to› you, ye did not deliver me
from them.[30] And when I saw that ye were not going to help 3
me, I took my life in my hand, and passed over to the Ammonites,
and JHVH delivered them into my power. Why, therefore, have ye
come up against me to-day to make war on me? Then Jephthah 4
assembled all the men of Gilead, and fought with the Ephraimites;
and the men of Gilead defeated the Ephraimites‹›[31] . . .
And the Gileadites seized the fords of the Jordan to intercept the 5
Ephraimites; and when one of the survivors of the Ephraimites would
say: Let me cross, the men of Gilead would ask him: Art thou
an Ephraimite? And if he answered: No, they would bid him say 6
Shibboleth; and if he said Sibboleth, and ‹could› not pronounce
it as they did, they took him, and slaughtered him at the fords
of the Jordan.[32] And there fell of Ephraim at that time forty-two
thousand. Jephthah judged Israel six years; then Jephthah, the 7
Gileadite, died, and was buried in ‹his› city, ‹Mizpah› in Gilead.[33]

The Judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon.

AFTER him Ibzan, of Beth-lehem, judged Israel.[1] He had thirty 8. 9
sons, and thirty daughters whom he married abroad, and
thirty daughters-in-law whom he brought from abroad for his sons.[2]
He judged Israel seven years. Then Ibzan died, and was buried 10
at Beth-lehem.

After him Elon, the Zebulonite, judged Israel; he judged Israel 11
ten years. Then Elon, the Zebulonite, died, and was buried at 12
‹Elon› in the land of Zebulun.[3]

After him Abdon ben-Hillel, the Pirathonite, judged Israel. 13
He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy 14
asses. He judged Israel eight years.[4] Then Abdon ben-Hillel, the 15
Pirathonite, died, and was buried at Pirathon in the ‹Highlands› of
Ephraim, in the ‹district of Shalim›.[5]

Stories of Samson

AND THE MISCHIEF HE DID TO THE PHILISTINES

Samson's Birth.

13,1 THE Israelites again offended JHVH, and He gave them into the
2 power of the Philistines for forty years.[1] Now there was a
certain man of Zorah, of the clan of the Danites, named Manoah,
3 whose wife was barren and had no child.[2] And the Messenger
of JHVH[3] appeared to the woman, and said to her: Thou art
barren and hast borne no child; but thou shalt conceive and bear
4 a son. Now, therefore, beware, and do not drink wine or other
5 intoxicating drink, and do not eat anything unclean.[4] For thou art
with child, and wilt bear a son; and no razor shall touch his
head, for from the womb the boy shall be a religious votary;[5] **he
will make a beginning of delivering Israel from the Philistines.**
6 The woman came and told her husband: A man of God came to
me,[6] and his appearance was like that of the Messenger of God,
very venerable; but I did not ask him whence he came, nor did
7 he tell me his name. And he said to me: Thou art with child,
and wilt bear a son; now, therefore, do not drink wine nor intoxi-
cating drink, and do not eat anything unclean, for from the womb
8 to the day of his death the boy shall be a religious votary. Then
Manoah besought JHVH, and said: I pray Thee, O Lord, let the
man of God whom Thou didst send come again to us and teach
9 us what we shall do to the boy that is to be born. And God
hearkened to the prayer of Manoah, and the Messenger of God
came again to the woman as she was tarrying in the field
10 (Manoah her husband was not with her). And the woman ran
at once, and told her husband, saying to him: The man who came
11 to me the other day has appeared to me. So Manoah rose, and
followed his wife; and when he came to the man, Manoah said to
him: Art thou the man who spoke to the woman? He answered:
12 I am. Then Manoah said: Now, when that which thou dost foretell
comes true, what shall be the rule for the boy and his mode of
13 life. And the Messenger of JHVH replied to Manoah: Let the
14 woman avoid all that I bade her; she must not eat any product
of the vine, and let her not drink wine or other intoxicating drink,

nor eat anything unclean; every thing that I commanded her she 13
must observe. And Manoah said to the Messenger of JHVH: Let us 15
press thee to stay, and let us prepare thee a kid.[7] But the Mes- 16
senger of JHVH answered Manoah: Though thou press me, I will
not eat of thy food; but if thou wilt make a burnt-offering, thou
must offer it to JHVH. [] And Manoah said to the Messenger of 17
JHVH: What is thy name? that if thy prediction come true we may
honor thee.‹[*]› The Messenger of JHVH answered him: Why dost 18
thou inquire my name, seeing it is ineffable?[8] So Manoah took a 19
kid, ***and the cereal offering,*** and offered it as a burnt-offering on the
rock to JHVH, ‹the› Wonder Worker ○.[9] When the flame ascended 20
heavenward from the altar, the Messenger of JHVH ascended in the
flame of the altar, while Manoah and his wife were looking on; and
they fell on their faces to the earth.[10] And the Messenger of JHVH 21
appeared no more to Manoah and his wife. Then Manoah knew
that it was the Messenger of JHVH. And Manoah said to his 22
wife: We shall certainly die, for we have seen a god.[11] But his 23
wife said to him: If JHVH had meant to kill us, He would not
have received at our hands a burnt-offering *and a cereal offering,*
and would not have shown us all these things, and would not
now have announced to us such a thing.[12] And the woman bore a 24
son, and named him Samson; and the boy grew up, and JHVH
blessed him. And the spirit of JHVH began to stir him ***at Mahaneh-*** 25
Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.[13]

Samson's Marriage and what followed.

SAMSON went down to Timnath,[1] and saw there a woman of 14, 1
the Philistines. When he went home he told his father and 2
his mother: I have seen at Timnath a woman of the Philistines;
now, therefore, get her for me to be my wife. But his father ***and*** 3
his mother remonstrated with him: Is there not a woman among
the daughters of thy kinsmen, or in all my people,[2] that thou must go
and take a wife among those uncircumcised Philistines?[3] But Samson
answered his father: Get this woman for me; she pleases me. His 4
father *and mother* did not know that this ‹stirring› was from JHVH,
because He was seeking a grievance against the Philistines.[4] **(At**
that time the Philistines ruled over Israel.) So Samson went down, 5

13, 16 *for Manoah did not know that he was the Messenger of JHVH

14 *with his father and mother,*[5] to Timnath; and when *they* came to
the vineyards of Timnath, a fierce young lion came roaring toward
6 him. And the spirit of JHVH came mightily upon him,[6] and he tore
the lion asunder as a man tears a kid; he had nothing whatever
in his hands. *But he did not tell his father and mother what he*
7 *had done.*[7] Then he went down, and talked to the woman, and
8 she was pleasing to Samson. When he returned, after a time, *to*
marry her,[8] he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and
9 found a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey. And
he scraped out the honey into his hands, and went on, eating as
he went, and came to his father and mother, and gave some to
them, and they ate; but he did not tell them that he had scraped
10 the honey from the body of the lion.[9] And *his father*[10] went down
to the woman; and Samson gave a feast there, for so bridegrooms
11 used to do. And *when they saw him, they* took thirty comrades,
12 and they were with him.[11] And Samson said to them: I will
propound to you a riddle; if ye can tell me what it is, during the
seven days that the feast lasts, *and find it out,*[12] I will give you
13 thirty fine robes and thirty festival dresses. And if ye cannot tell
me, then ye shall give me thirty fine robes and thirty festival
14 dresses. They answered: Propound your riddle, let us hear it! He
said:

Out of the eater came something to eat,
And out of the strong came something sweet.

15 And they were not able to guess the riddle *for ‹six› days;*[13] so
on the seventh day they said to Samson's wife: Cozen thy hus-
band, and make him tell us the riddle, or we will burn thee and
16 thy family. Didst thou invite us ‹hither› to impoverish us? So
Samson's wife hung on him with tears, and said: Thou only hatest
me, and dost not love me at all. Thou hast given a riddle to
my countrymen, and hast not explained it to me. He answered:
Lo, I have not told even my father and mother, and shall I tell
17 thee? But she hung on him weeping the seven days that they
kept the feast; and on the seventh day he told her, because she
18 so beset him; and she told the riddle to her countrymen. On the
seventh day, before he entered the ‹bridal chamber›,[14] the men of
the town said to him: What is sweeter than honey? and what is
stronger than a lion? He replied:

If with my heifer ye did not plough,
Ye had not found out my riddle, ‹I trow›.

Then the spirit of JHVH came mightily upon him, and he went 14, 19
down to Ashkelon, and killed thirty of them, and took their spoil,
and gave the festival dresses to those who had found out the
riddle.[15] And he was very angry, and went away to his home.
But Samson's bride was given to the comrade who had been his 20
bridal companion.[16]

After a time, at the season of wheat harvest,[17] Samson went 15, 1
to visit his wife, taking with him a kid. But when he was about 2
to go into the inner apartment to his wife her father said to
him: I thought that thou must certainly hate her, so I gave
her to thy friend; but her younger sister is more beautiful than
she; take her instead. Then Samson said to them: In this case I 3
shall not be to blame if I do the Philistines an injury.[18] So 4
Samson went and caught three hundred foxes,[19] and took torches,
and turned the foxes tail to tail, and fastened a torch between
every pair of tails, and set fire to the torches, and turned the foxes 5
loose among the Philistines' standing grain, and burned both the
shocks and the standing grain, ***and the vineyards ‹and› olive trees.***

When the Philistines inquired: Who has done this? they were 6
told: Samson, the Timnathite's son-in-law; because the Timnathite
took Samson's wife, and gave her to Samson's friend. Then the
Philistines went up, and burned her and her father's family. And 7
Samson said to them: Since ye act thus, I swear I will be avenged
on you; and after that, I will leave off. So he smote them, hip 8
and thigh,[20] with great slaughter; and went down, and stayed in
the cleft of the Cliff Etam.[21] Then the Philistines came up, and 9
encamped in Judah, and made a raid upon Lehi.[22] And when the 10
people of Judah asked them: Why have ye come up against us?
they said: We have come to make Samson prisoner, to do to him
as he has done to us. So three thousand men out of Judah went 11
down to the cleft of the Cliff Etam, and said to Samson: Dost
thou not know that the Philistines rule over us? What is this that
thou hast done to us? He replied: As they did to me I have
done to them. Then they told him: We have come down to 12
make thee prisoner, and deliver thee to the Philistines; and Sam-
son said: Swear to me that ye yourselves will not fall upon me.
They said: No; but we will bind thee, and deliver thee to them; 13
we will not put thee to death. So they bound him with two new
ropes, and brought him up from the Cliff. Now when he reached 14
Lehi the Philistines came to meet him with loud shouts, and the
spirit of JHVH came mightily upon him, and the ropes that were

15 on his arms became like flax that has caught fire; his bonds
15 melted from off his hands.[23] And he found the fresh jaw-bone of
an ass,[24] and reached out, and picked it up, and killed with it a
16 thousand men. Then Samson said:

With the jaw-bone of an ass
‹I assailed my assailants›;[25]
With the jawbone of an ass
Have I slain a thousand men.

17 After he had said this, he threw away the jaw-bone which he had
18 in his hand; thus the place came to be called Ramath-lehi.[26] And
he was very thirsty, and called to JHVH: Thou hast given Thy
servant this great victory, and shall I now die of thirst, and fall
19 into the hands of the uncircumcised? Then God cleft The Mortar
which is in Lehi, and water flowed from it; and he drank, and his
spirits revived. (Hence the spring, which is in Lehi to this day,
20 got the name En-hakkore.) [redacted]

Samson carries off the Gates of Gaza.

16,1 ‹THENCE› Samson went down to Gaza,[1] and saw there a harlot,
2 and went in to her. When the Gazeans ‹were told› that
Samson was come thither, ***they went about, and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city,*** [2] ***and*** they kept still all night,
3 saying: ‹Let us wait› till the morning light, and then kill him. But
Samson lay till midnight; and at midnight he rose, and laid hold
of the doors of the city gate and the two gate-posts, and pulled
them up, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders, and carried
them up to the top of the hill which is in front of Hebron.[3]

Samson and Delilah.

4 AFTER this, Samson fell in love with a woman in the Valley of
5 Sorek,[1] whose name was Delilah. And the princes of the
Philistines came to her, and said: Cozen him, and find out what
makes his strength so great, and how we can cope with him, and
bind him, to overpower him;[2] and we, on our part, will each give
6 thee eleven hundred shekels of silver. So Delilah asked Samson:
Tell me, I pray thee, what makes thy strength so great, and how
7 couldst thou be bound to overpower thee? Samson answered: If
men should bind me with seven new bowstrings which have not



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GAZA

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been dried,[3] my strength would leave me, and I should be like any 16
other man. Then the princes of the Philistines brought her seven 8
new bowstrings which had not been dried, and she bound him with
them. She had the men waiting in concealment in the inner apart- 9
ment. Then she said to him: The Philistines are upon thee, Sam-
son! But he snapped the bowstrings as a strand of tow snaps at
the breath of fire;[4] so the secret of his strength was not dis-
covered. Thereupon Delilah said to Samson: Lo, thou hast cheated 10
me, and told me falsehoods; now tell me wherewith thou 11
canst be bound. He answered: If men should bind me fast
with new ropes wherewith no work has been done,[5] my strength
would leave me, and I should be like any other man. So Delilah 12
took new ropes, and bound him with them; and said to him: The
Philistines are upon thee, Samson! (Now the men were lying in
wait in the inner apartment.) But he snapped the ropes off from
his arms like thread. Then Delilah said to Samson: Hitherto thou 13
hast cheated me, and told me falsehoods; tell me wherewith thou
canst be bound. And he said to her: If thou shouldst weave the
seven braids of my hair into the web,[6] ‹and beat it up with the
pin, my strength would leave me, and I should be like any other
man. So while he was asleep Delilah took the seven braids of 14
his hair, and wove them into the web›, and beat it up with the
pin. Then she said to him: The Philistines are upon thee, Samson!
And he started from his sleep, and pulled up *the loom with the
web. Then she said to him: How canst thou say: I love thee, 15
when thou dost not confide in me? Three times now thou hast
cheated me, and hast not told me what makes thy strength so
great. And as she beset him every day with her importunities, and 16
pressed him hard, he grew tired to death of it,[7] and told her his 17
whole secret; and said to her: A razor has never come near my
head, for from my birth I have been a religious votary;[8] if ‹my
head› were shaved, my strength would depart from me, and I should
become weak, and like the rest of men. When Delilah saw that he 18
had told her his whole secret, she sent a message, and summoned
the princes of the Philistines, saying: Come, this once; for he has
told ‹me› his whole secret. So the princes of the Philistines came to
her, bringing the money with them. And she put Samson to sleep 19
in her lap, and called a man ‹who› shaved off the seven braids

16, 14 *the pin

16 of his hair; and ‹he› began to ‹be brought under›, and his strength
20 departed from him. Then she said: The Philistines are upon thee,
Samson! and he awoke from his sleep, and said to himself: I
shall get off as I have done time and time again, and shake myself
free; for he did not know that JHVH had departed from him.[9]
21 Then the Philistines seized him, and bored out his eyes, and took
him down to Gaza, and made him fast with shackles, and he was
22 set to turning the mill in the prison.[10] But his hair began to grow
again after it had been shaved off.[11]

23 The princes of the Philistines came together at Gaza to offer
a great sacrifice to their god Dagon,[12] and to hold festivities; for
they said: Our god has given our enemy, Samson, into our power.
24 And when the people saw him, they set up a shout in honor of
their god; for they said: Our god has given into our power our
25 enemy, who devastated our fields, and slew many of us.[13] And
when they were in high spirits, they commanded: Call Samson,
that he may make sport for us. So they called Samson from the
prison, and he made sport before them. And they placed him
26 between the columns.[14] Then Samson said to the attendant who
led him by the hand: Place me where I can feel the columns by
27 which the house is supported, that I may lean against them. Now
the house was full of the men and women; ***and all the princes of the Philistines were there; while on the roof were about three thousand men and women,*** who were looking on while Samson made
28 sport. Then Samson prayed to JHVH: O Lord JHVH, remember
me, I beseech Thee, and give me strength only this once, O God,
that I may avenge myself on the Philistines for one of my two
29 eyes.[15] Then Samson grasped the two middle columns by which
the house was supported, and leaned his weight upon them, one with
30 his right hand and the other with his left. And Samson said: Let
me die with the Philistines. Then he bowed with all his might,
and the house fell on the princes and on all the people that were
in it; so that those whom he killed at his death were more than
31 those whom he had killed during his life. His brothers and all
his father's family came down, and took him up, and went up, and
buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol, in the tomb of his father
Manoah. **He had judged Israel twenty years.**

Additional Stories of the Times of the Judges

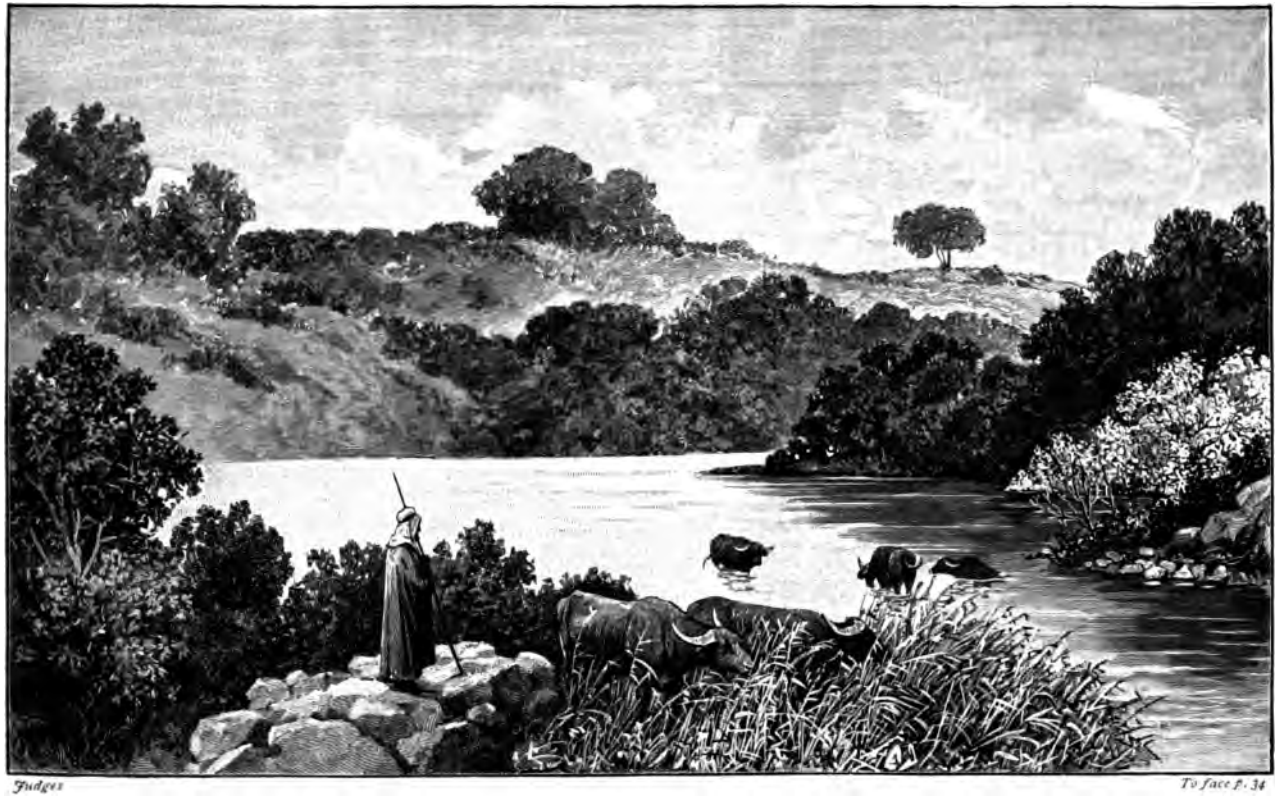
Micah's idols; Migration of the Danites.

THERE was a man in the Highlands of Ephraim whose name 17,1
was Micah.[1] He said to his mother:[2] The eleven hundred 2aα
shekels of silver which were taken from thee, and about which
thou didst make a solemn declaration, saying before me: I sacredly 3bα
consecrate the silver to JHVH, from my hand ‹alone›, to make a
carved *and a molten* image,[3]—this silver is in my possession; I 2aβ
took it; but now I will restore it to thee. And his mother said: 3bβ. 2b
Blessed by JHVH is my son![4] ס Thereupon he restored the silver to 4
his mother, who took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them
to a silversmith, who made a carved *and a molten* image;[5] and it
was in Micah's house. Now the man Micah had a small temple,[6] 5
and made an Ephod and Teraphim,[7] and consecrated one of his
sons, who became his priest. (In those days there was no king in 6
Israel; every man did as he pleased.)[8] **And there was a youth** 7
from Beth-lehem in Judah, **of the clan of Judah; he was a Levite,**
residing there. And the man left the city, Beth-lehem in Judah,[10] 8
to sojourn in whatever place he might chance upon, and came, in
the course of his journey, to the Highlands of Ephraim, to Micah's
home. And Micah asked him: Whence comest thou? He answered: 9
I am a Levite from Beth-lehem in Judah, and am traveling to
sojourn in whatever place I may chance upon. Then Micah said 10
to him: Stay with me; be my father and priest,[11] and I will give
thee ten shekels of silver a year and a suit of apparel, and thy
victuals. ס And the Levite agreed to stay with the man; **and the** 11
youth was treated by him as though he had been one of his own
sons. And Micah consecrated the Levite,[12] and the youth became
his priest, and lived in Micah's house. Then Micah said: Now I 12
know that JHVH will prosper me, because I have a Levite for 13
priest.[13] (In those days there was no king in Israel.)[14] 18,1a

And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking for 1b
themselves a landed possession to dwell in; ***for up to that time***
there had not fallen to them a possession among the tribes of
Israel.[15] So the Danites sent, of their several clans, five men, 2
[redacted] from Zorah and Eshtaol,

18 to explore the land and examine it, bidding them: Go, examine
the land! And they came to the Highlands of Ephraim, to
3 Micah's home, and stayed there over night. When they were in
the neighborhood of Micah's house, they recognized the voice of
the young Levite; so they turned aside thither, and asked him: 5
Who brought thee here? and what art thou doing in this place?
4 and what art thou here for? He replied: Thus and so Micah has
5 done to me; and he hired me, and I became his priest.[17] Then
they said to him: Inquire of God, that we may know whether the
6 errand on which we are going ‹will be› successful. The priest 10
answered them: Go, and prosper, the errand on which ye are
7 going is under the eye of JHVH.[18] So the five men went on, and
came to Laish, and they found the people who were in the city
living after the Phœnician fashion without fear, secure and unsus-
picious of danger. There was no ‹lack of anything which the land 15
produced›, . . . and they were remote from the Phœnicians, and
8 had nothing to do with any one else. Then the explorers returned
to their kinsmen to Zorah and Eshtaol;[20] and when their kinsmen
9 asked: What do ye ‹report›? they answered: Arise, let us march
against them; for we have seen the land, and it is very good. . . 20
10 Do not delay to set out to enter and possess the land. When ye
reach it, ye will come to a people unsuspicious of danger, and the
region is of wide extent; God has given it into your power, a
place wherein there is no lack of anything which the land produces.
11 Accordingly there removed *thence of* the clan of the Danites, 25
12 from Zorah and Eshtaol, six hundred men under arms.[21] And they
went up, and encamped at Kirjath-jearim in Judah; from this cir-
cumstance the place received the name Mahaneh-Dan, which it
13 bears to this day; *it lies west of Kirjath-jearim.*[22] Thence they
passed on to the Highlands of Ephraim, and came to Micah's 30
14 home. And the five men who had gone to explore the land ‹
spoke up, and said to their kinsmen: Do ye know that in these
houses there is an Ephod and Teraphim, *and a carved and a*
15 *molten image*? Now think what ye will do. [illegible] turned
[illegible] and came to the house of the young Levite (*to* 35
16 *Micah's house*) and gave him a friendly greeting.[23] And ‹the› six
hundred men under arms stationed themselves at the entrance of
17 the gate.[24] But the five men who had gone to explore the land

18, 14 ᵃ Laish



Judges *To face p. 34*

DAN

(See p. 92, l. 9)

went up, went in there, took the carved image, and the Ephod, 18
and the Teraphim, and the molten image;—now the priest was
standing at the entrance of the gate, and the six hundred men
under arms. And these came to Micah's house, and took *the* 18
carved image, and the Ephod, and the Teraphim, *and the molten*
image. And when the priest said to them: What are ye doing?[25] 19
they replied: Keep still! put thy hand over thy mouth, and go
with us, and be our father and priest.[26] Is it better for thee
to be priest to one man's household, or priest to a tribe and a
clan in Israel? The priest was pleased, and took the Ephod, and 20
the Teraphim, *and the carved image*, and placed himself in the
midst of the men. Then they turned, and marched away, putting 21
the children and the cattle and their property in front of them.
When they were at some distance from Micah's house, the men 22
who lived in the houses near Micah's were called out, and pur-
sued the Danites. They shouted to the Danites, who turned 23
their face, and said to Micah: What is the matter with thee, that
thou art called out? He answered: Ye take my gods that I made, 24
and my priest, and go off; what have I left? What do ye mean
by asking: What is the matter with thee? The Danites answered: 25
Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest some savage fellows
fall upon thee, and thou sacrifice thine own life and the lives
of thy household.[27] Then the Danites continued their march; and 26
Micah, seeing that they were too strong for him, turned and went
back to his home. But they took ‹the idol› which Micah had 27
made, and the priest whom he had, and came to Laish,[28] upon a
people secure and unsuspicious of danger, and slew them without
quarter, and burned the town itself. There was no one to save it, 28
for it was remote from the Phœnicians, and had no relations with
any one else; it lay in the plain belonging to Beth-rehob. And they
rebuilt the city, and dwelt in it, calling it Dan, *the name of their* 29
ancestor who was born to Israel;[29] *but the original name of the*
city was Laish. The Danites set up for themselves *the idol*;[30] and 30
Jonathan, the son of ‹Moses'› son Gershom,[31] and his descendants
were priests to the tribe of Dan till the *depopulation of the land.*[32]
And they put in place Micah's idol which he had made, and it 31
continued there as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.[33]

The Outrage at Gibeah

and the Vengeance of the Israelites on the Tribe of Benjamin.

19, 1 IN those days, **when there was no king in Israel,**[1] there resided
in the remote parts of the Highlands of Ephraim[2] a Levite
2 who took him a concubine from Beth-lehem in Judah. And his
concubine ‹fell out› with him, and left him, and went to her father's
3 house, in Beth-lehem in Judah; and was there ○ four months. Then
her husband followed her, to speak affectionately to her,[3] and bring
‹her› back; having with him his servant and a pair of asses; and ‹he
came› to her father's house. When the girl's father saw him, he
4 came to meet him, rejoicing. And his father-in-law, the girl's
father,[4] detained him, and he stayed with him three days; they ate
5 and drank, and lodged there. On the fourth day, when they rose
in the morning, he was about to set out,[5] but the girl's father
said to his son-in-law: Stay thy stomach with a bit of bread, and
6 after that thou mayst go. So the two sat and ate together, and
drank; **and the girl's father said to** the man: Be persuaded, now,
7 **and pass the night, and be merry. And** when the man rose to go,
his father-in-law urged him, and he passed the night there again.
8 **And when he got up in the morning** *on the fifth day* to go, the
girl's father said to him: Stay thy stomach; so ‹they tarried› till
9 the decline of day, **and ate together.** And when the man rose
to go, with his concubine and his servant, his father-in-law, the
girl's father, said to him: See, the day ‹is declined toward evening;
pass the night here to-day also›, and be merry; then ye may
10 rise in the morning for your journey and go to thy home.[6] But
the man refused to pass the night, and rose, and set out,[7]
came to a point opposite Jebus[8] **(that is, Jerusalem)**
11 **of saddled asses, and his concubine with him.** When they were
near Jebus, and the day was far spent, the servant said to his
master: Come, let us turn aside to this town of the Jebusites, and
12 pass the night in it. But his master replied: We will not turn
aside to a city of aliens, ‹who› are no Israelites;[9] *we will keep*
13 *on* **to Gibeah. And he said to his servant: Let us draw up**
to one of these places and pass the night in Gibeah or in
14 **Ramah.**[10] So they continued their way, and the sun went down
on them as they were beside Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin.
15 **There they turned aside to enter and pass the night in Gibeah;**
and he entered, and sat down in the market place of the town;
16 but no one invited them into his house to lodge.[11] Just then an

old man was coming home at evening from his work in the fields. 19
Now this old man was from the Highlands of Ephraim, and was only sojourning in Gibeah, whereas the inhabitants of the place were Benjamites.[12] And when he looked he saw the traveler in 17
the market place of the town; and the old man said: Whither
goest thou, and whence comest thou? He answered: We are 18
passing through from Beth-lehem in Judah to the distant parts of
the Highlands of Ephraim. I came thence, and went to Beth-lehem
in Judah, and am now returning ‹to my home›, and no one invites
us into his house. We have here both chopped straw and grain 19
for the asses, and bread and wine for me and thy maid-servant
and the boy who is with thy servant‹›; we need nothing.[13] Then 20
the old man said: Welcome! Let all that thou needest be my
charge; only do not pass the night in the market place.[14] So he 21
took them into his house, and mixed feed for their asses, and
washed their feet; and they ate and drank.[15] But while they were 22
feasting merrily, the men of the town, vile scoundrels, gathered
about the house, beating on the door, and bidding the old man,
the master of the house: Bring out the man who has come into
thy house, that we may know him.[16] The master of the house 23
went out to them, and said: Nay, my brethren, be not so wicked;
since this man has come under my roof, do not commit this wanton
deed. **Here are my virgin daughter and his concubine; let me** 24
bring them out, and ye may ravish them, and do with them what-
ever ye please; but to this man do not do this wanton deed. But 25
the men would not listen to him. Then the man laid hold of his
concubine, and thrust her out to them into the street;[17] and they
knew her and abused her all night till morning; and let her go
only at the approach of dawn. As the morning began to appear, 26
the woman came and lay at the door of the man's house where
her lord was, till daylight. And when her lord rose in the 27
morning, and opened the door of the house, and went out to
continue his journey, there was the woman, his concubine, lying at
the door of the house, with her hands on the sill. And he said 28
to her: Get up; let us go! but there came no answer. Then the
man put her ‹body› upon the ass, and set out to return to his
home. And when he came to his house, he took a knife, and laid 29
hold of his concubine, and cut her up, joint by joint, into twelve
pieces,[18] and sent them throughout all the borders of Israel. ‹And 30
he commanded the men whom he sent out: Thus shall ye say to
all the men of Israel: Did ever a thing like this happen, from the

19 time that the Israelites came up from Egypt to this day›? ‹[Take ‹counsel› about it! Speak your mind!]› And every one who saw it said: Such a thing as this has not happened nor been seen from the time that the Israelites came up from Egypt to this day. []19

20, 1 Then all the Israelites went out to war, **and the Congregation assembled as one man, from Dan to Beersheba and the land of** 2 **Gilead,** to ‹the sanctuary of› JHVH at Mizpah.20 **And the principal men of all the people took their stand, ‹and› all the tribes of Israel, in the assembly of the people of God,21 four hundred thousand** 3 **footmen who drew sword.22** And the Benjamites heard that the Israelites were gone to Mizpah.23 And the Israelites said: Say, how 4 did this crime happen? The Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, answered: I came with my concubine to Gibeah which 5 belongs to Benjamin, to pass the night; and the citizens of Gibeah assailed me, and gathered about the house where I was, by night. Me they meant to kill,24 and they ravished my concubine so that 6 she died. Then I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent the pieces throughout all the country, ***the possession*** of Israel; 7 because they committed[α] a wanton crime in Israel. Here ye all 8 are, Israelites; give your word and counsel here! Then all the people stood up **as one man,** saying: We will not go to our several habitations, and we will not turn to our several homes.25 9 **Now this is what we will do to Gibeah:26 ‹we will go up› against** 10 **it by lot; and will take ten men out of a hundred, through all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred out of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to procure provisions for the people,27 to do[β] to ‹Gibeah› of Benjamin what the wanton crime which its inhabitants** 11 have committed in Israel deserves. ***And all the men of Israel were*** 12 ***gathered against the city as one man, as confederates.28*** Then the tribes of Israel sent men throughout all the tribe‹› of Benjamin, say- 13 ing: What is this crime which has been committed among you? Now, therefore, give up those vile scoundrels, who are in Gibeah, and let us put them to death, and extirpate ‹the› evil from Israel. But the Benjamites refused to listen to the words of their Israelite 14 brethren. The Benjamites gathered from their cities to Gibeah, to 15 go out to war with the Israelites.29 **And the Benjamites mustered**

20, 6 [α] lewdness and 10 [β] for them to go

that day from their cities twenty-‹five› thousand fighting men, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who mustered seven hundred young warriors;[30] ‹ᵃevery one of them could sling a stone to a hair's 16b breadth, and not miss.[31] The Israelites mustered, exclusive of Ben- 17 jamin,[32] four hundred thousand fighting men, all warriors. *And* 18 *they rose, and went up to Beth-el, and inquired of God; and the Israelites asked: Who of us shall go first to battle with the Benjamites; and JHVH responded: Judah ‹shall go› first.*[33] So the 19 Israelites set out in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah.[34] And the Israelite forces marched out to battle with Benjamin; and 20 the Israelite forces formed their line of battle against them in the vicinity of Gibeah.[35] Then the Benjamites sallied out from Gibeah, 21 and wrought havoc with Israel on that day, leaving twenty-two thousand men on the ground. But[ᵇ] the Israelite forces took 22 courage, and formed their lines again on the same ground on which they had formed them on the first day.[36] *And the Israelites went* 23 *up ‹to Beth-el›, and wept before JHVH till evening, and inquired of JHVH: Shall we again advance to battle with our Benjamite brethren? JHVH responded: March against them! So the Israelites* 24 *closed upon the Benjamites the second day;* and the Benjamites 25 sallied from Gibeah to meet them on the second day, and wrought havoc again with Israel, leaving eighteen thousand men on the ground,—all these were fighting men. And all the Israelites[ᶜ] went 26 up and came to Beth-el, and wept and sat there before JHVH, and fasted that day till evening; and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before JHVH.[37] And the Israelites inquired of JHVH (*the* 27 *Ark of the Covenant of God was there in those days, and* 28 *Phinehas, the son of Aaron's son Eleazar, ministered before Him in those days*),[38] saying: Shall we again march out to battle with our Benjamite brethren, or shall we desist? JHVH responded: March! to-morrow I will give them into your power. And Israel 29 put men in ambush against Gibeah, on all sides.[39] So the Israelites 30 marched against the Benjamites on the third day, and formed their lines against Gibeah as on the former occasions. And the Ben- 31 jamites sallied out to meet the people,[ᵈ] and began to slay some of the people as on former occasions[ᵉ] in the open field, about

20, 16b ᵃleft-handed 22 ᵇthe people 26 ᶜand all the people

31 ᵈthey were drawn away from the city[40]

ᵉon the highways, one of which goes up to Beth-el, and another to Gibeah[41]

20, 32 thirty men of Israel. And the Benjamites said: We are beating
them ‹again›, as we did the first time. But the Israelites had
passed the word: Let us flee, and draw them away from the city
33 to the highways. Then all the men of Israel rose ○, and formed
line at Baal-tamar;[42] and the ambush of Israel rushed from its
34 position, ‹west of Gibeah›, and gained a position opposite Gibeah,
ten thousand young warriors picked from all Israel;[43] and the
fighting being severe, the Benjamites did not perceive the disaster
35 which was imminent. And JHVH gave Israel the victory over Ben-
jamin; the Israelites destroyed of Benjamin that day twenty-five
36 thousand one hundred men; all these were fighting men.[44] And the
Benjamites saw that they were defeated. But the men of Israel
gave ground to Benjamin, relying upon the ambush which they
37 had set for Gibeah.[45] Then the ambush made haste, and rushed
upon Gibeah; *and the ambush moved out, and slew without quarter*
38 *all the inhabitants of the city.*[46] Now it had been agreed between
the men of Israel and the ambush ○, that when ‹the ambush›
39 sent up a signal-smoke from the city, then the men of Israel
‹should› turn about in the battle.[47] Now Benjamin had begun to
make slaughter among the men of Israel, and had slain about
thirty men; for they said: We have surely beaten them ‹again›, as
40 in the former battle. Just then the fire-signal began to rise from
the city, a column of smoke; and the Benjamites looked back,
41 and saw the whole city going up in flames heavenward.[48] Then
the Israelites turned about, and the men of Benjamin were in
42 dismay; for they saw that disaster had overtaken them. And they
turned before the men of Israel toward the wilderness;[49] but the
main battle clung to them, and those who came from the cit‹y›
43 were making havoc with them in the midst ○.[50] They ‹cut› Ben-
jamin ‹to pieces› ○ ‹from Nohah› ○ as far as opposite ‹Geba›, east-
44 ward.[51] There fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men; all these
45 were valiant warriors.[52] Then they turned, and fled to the desert,
to the Cliff of Rimmon;[53] and the Israelites gleaned on the high-
ways five thousand men, and dogged their heels to ‹Geba›, and
46 slew of them two thousand men. The whole number of Benja-
mites that fell on that day was twenty-five thousand fighting
47 men;[54] these were all valiant warriors. So they turned, and fled
to the desert, to the Cliff of Rimmon, six hundred men; and
48 abode on the Cliff of Rimmon four months.[55] But the men of
Israel returned to the Benjamites, and slew them without quarter,
both ‹man› and beast,—everything that was there; also all the
towns that there were ‹in Benjamin›, they burned.[56]

Now the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah: No one of us 21, 1
shall give his daughter in marriage to a Benjamite.[57] So[58] the 2
people came to Beth-el, and stayed there till evening before JHVH,
and wept loud and long,[59] and said: Why, O JHVH, God of Israel, 3
is this come about in Israel; that one tribe is lacking to-day in
Israel?[60] *And on the next day the people rose, and built there* 4
an altar, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. And the 5
Israelites said: Who is there, of all the tribes of Israel, that did
not come up, in the assembly, to JHVH; for a great oath had
been taken, that any who should not come up to JHVH in Mizpah
should without fail be put to death. And the Israelites were sorry 6
for their Benjamite brethren, and said: One tribe is cut off this
day from Israel. What shall we do for them* in regard to wives; 7
seeing that we have sworn by JHVH not to give them any of
our daughters as wives? Then they inquired: What one is there 8
out of the tribes of Israel that did not come up to JHVH in
Mizpah? Now not a man had come to the camp from Jabesh
in Gilead, *to the assembly.* So the people were counted, and there 9
was not a man there of the inhabitants of Jabesh in Gilead.[61] And 10
the Congregation sent thither twelve thousand men, of the valiant
warriors, commanding them: Go, slay the inhabitants of Jabesh in
Gilead without quarter, men, women, and children! This is what 11
ye must do: every male, and every woman who has lain with a
male, ye must devote to destruction![62] And they found among the 12
inhabitants of Jabesh in Gilead four hundred virgin girls, who had
not lain with a male,[63] and brought them to the camp, to Shiloh
in the land of Canaan.[64] Then all the Congregation sent a message 13
to the Benjamites who were at the Cliff of Rimmon, and proclaimed
peace to them. So the Benjamites returned at that time; and they 14
gave them the maidens of the women of Jabesh in Gilead whom
they had saved alive; but there were not enough for them. [65]The 15
people were sorry for Benjamin, because JHVH had made a breach
in the tribes of Israel.[66] And the Elders of the Congregation said: 16
What shall we do in regard to wives for those who remain;
for women had been wholly destroyed among Benjamin.[67] And 17
they said: ‹How shall› a remnant of Benjamin ‹be saved›, and no
tribe be blotted out from Israel?[68] since we ourselves cannot 18
give them wives from among our daughters. For the Israelites

21, 7 *for those who are left

21 had sworn: Cursed be the man who gives a wife to a Benjamite!
19 Then they said: The festival in honor of JHVH is held every year
at Shiloh, ***which is north of Beth-el, east of the road that runs***
20 ***from Beth-el to Shechem, and south of Lebonah.***[69] ***And they bade***
21 ***the Benjamites:***[70] Go, lie in wait in the vineyards; and ye must
watch, and when the maidens of Shiloh come out to dance in the
religious dances,[71] ye must come out of the vineyards, and snatch
for yourselves every man a wife of the maidens of Shiloh, and
22 make off to the land of Benjamin. And if their fathers or brothers
come to us to complain of you, we will say to them: ‹Let them
keep them›; **because ‹they› did not each get a wife in the war.**[72]
23 For ‹had› ye ‹given› them to them, ye ‹would now› be guilty. The
Benjamites did so; and took wives, **equal to their own number,** of
the dancers whom they stole; and they went back again to their
24 possession, and rebuilt their towns, and dwelt in them. **Then the**
Israelites dispersed thence, at that time, each to his tribe and clan;
25 **and thence they went each to his own possession. In those days**
there was no king in Israel; every man did as he pleased.[73]

Notes on Judges

THE Book of Judges consists of three parts: 1,1–2,5; 2,6–16,31; 17–21. The body of the Book, to which alone the title in strict propriety belongs, represents the history of Israel, from the generation succeeding the Invasion to the 'days of the Philistines' preceding the establishment of the kingdom, as a series of apostasies, judgments, and deliverances, recurring in this order with unbroken regularity. A comprehensive survey and estimate of the whole period is given in the Introduction, 2,6–3,6: As soon as Joshua and his contemporaries had passed away, the Israelites forsook their own God, JHVH, and adopted the religions of the peoples about them. Indignant at this unfaithfulness, God allowed them to be overrun and subjugated by their enemies. When in their distress they cried to Him for help, He relented, and raised them up champions (*Judges*), who delivered them from their foes. But the efforts of these leaders wrought no thorough or lasting amendment; when they were dead the people relapsed, and did worse than their fathers, thus bringing upon themselves fresh judgments of JHVH by the hand of their enemies.

In the sequel, the history of the period is set forth in a corresponding scheme: The Israelites offended JHVH by defection from Him; He gave them into the power of their enemies for so many years; then He raised up a deliverer, who freed them from their oppressors; under him the land enjoyed security for so many years. This is repeated briefly, and for the most part in set phrases, in the case of the Judges Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, and forms the setting for the recital of the heroic deeds of these champions, which are narrated at greater length and evidently derived from older sources. (See further below, note on 2,6.)

CC. 17–21 form an appendix to the Book of Judges, containing two stories of the times, relating events of great moment in the history of two of the tribes: the migration of the Danites (cc. 17–18), and the vengeance taken by Israel for the outrage at Gibeah, resulting in the almost complete extirpation of the Benjamites (cc. 19–21).

The section 1,1–2,5 is a brief and obviously fragmentary account of the conquests and settlements of the Israelite tribes in Canaan. As c. 1 records particularly the districts which they did not at once get possession of, and tells how, in many parts of the land, Canaanite cities remained in the midst of Israel, while in others the Israelites settled peaceably among the native inhabitants, it stands not unsuitably before 2,6 ff.; the presence of these heathen was a snare

to Israel, the cause of all the evils which followed (see **2**, 1b. 5a). It is, however, plainly not a part of the original Book of Judges, whose introduction (**2**, 6–**3**, 6) not only makes no allusion to **1**, 1–**2**, 5, but connects itself immediately with the Book of Joshua in such a way as to leave no place for c. **1**, which must, therefore, have been inserted by a later editor.

Place of Judges in the History of Israel.

From the Book of Judges we learn all that we know directly about the formative period of the two Israelitish nations. The tribes which invaded Western Palestine were shepherds or herdsmen; in their new home they were constrained to settle, and till the soil. As c. **1** shows us, the conditions under which this change was made were not the same in all parts of the land, nor was it everywhere accomplished with equal rapidity; among the most southern tribes, indeed, it was never complete. The passage from the nomadic life to fixed habitation in cities and towns brought many other changes with it. The old clan organization must have been much impaired in the invasion; clans were broken up; several clans or fragments of clans settled side by side in the same village or city, and were united by new ties of common interest. The old simple customary law did not provide for the new questions which arose out of private property in land, for example; the old sanctions, based on blood kindred, were no longer effective. The old social order was thus dissolved, and was only slowly replaced by a new one, which must have conformed in the main to that of the Canaanites among whom the Israelites lived.

From the Canaanites, also, the Israelites learned the arts of husbandry. In so doing, they learned, of course, not only to plough, and sow, and reap; to cultivate the fig, the olive, and the vine, and to make wine and oil; but to practice the religious rites which were equally an indispensable part of ancient agriculture. They made their offerings for the grain and the wine and the oil to the Baals and Astartes of the land, who bestowed these gifts on their worshipers. In so doing, they did not dream of abandoning their own God, JHVH, for the gods of Canaan. But JHVH was a shepherd's God, whom they honored with the firstlings of their flocks and herds, not a God of the fruitful soil (*cf.* Gen. 4, 4 ff.). Later, indeed, when Canaan had become Israel's land, JHVH was regarded as its proprietor, and the worship of the nameless Baals, without any change in its character, was addressed to JHVH, as the Baal of Israel. The judgment of the later writers, who see in the whole period of the Judges an apostasy from JHVH to Canaanite heathenism, is thus not without foundation. Nor is it to be supposed that in the times of the Judges themselves there were none to protest against the adoption of Canaanite religions. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that then, as in later times — down even to the fall of Judah — there were zealots for JHVH who condemned the whole Canaanite civilization which Israel had adopted, and contended for the old simplicity of life and purity of religion — the ancient nomadic ideal.

The Israelites were not left in undisputed and undisturbed possession of their conquests. Their kinsmen on the other side of the Jordan, the Moabites and Ammonites, contested with them their newly acquired territories; the Bedouins of the southern and eastern deserts harried them. But the most serious struggle of the period was with the Canaanites under Sisera, from whom Israel was delivered by Deborah and Barak. The general rising of the tribes at Deborah's summons shows that in the religion of JHVH they had a strong bond of unity. The actual consolidation of the independent tribes in a national kingdom was forced upon them by the conquering progress of the Philistines; but this lies beyond the limits of our Book.

The great value of the Book of Judges lies in the faithful and vivid pictures which it gives us of this troubled and turbulent time in which historical Israel was making. Hardly any narrative in the OT throws more light on the social and religious life of the ancient Israelites than the story of Micah's idol and the migration of the Danites (cc. **17**. **18**). The stories of Samson (cc. **13**–**16**) are specimens of a kind of literature of which there are few other examples in the OT. Beside their historical importance, the stories themselves, so simply, directly, and strongly told, have a perpetual human interest.

Chronology of the Book of Judges.

The chronology of the Book of Judges presents very difficult problems, a completely satisfactory solution of which has not yet been achieved. A glance at the synoptical table below (p. 52) shows that in the case of the greater Judges the round numbers 40, 20, 80, predominate; that is, according to the Hebrew way of reckoning, a generation, half a generation, two generations. The same numbers meet us frequently in the preceding and following periods: the life of Moses is divided into three stages of forty years each; the wandering in the desert lasted forty years; Eli judged Israel forty years; David reigned forty years; Solomon, forty; &c. The key to this system is found in 1 Kings **6**, 1, according to which the entire interval between the exodus from Egypt and the building of Solomon's temple was four hundred and eighty years, or twelve generations of forty years each. The same system underlies the chronology of the Books of Kings. This simple theoretical construction, which strikingly resembles the first attempts of the Greeks in the same direction (Hecatæus of Miletus, about B. C. 550–476), is crossed by other numbers, which do not appear to be systematic; *e. g.* the rule of the Minor Judges. The chronology was probably constructed upon the assumption that the Judges formed a continuous succession, like the Kings who succeeded them, as follows: Moses 40; Joshua [40]; Othniel 40; Ehud 80; Barak 40; Gideon 40; the Minor Judges with Jephthah, together 76; Samson 20; Eli 20 (LXX); Samuel [40]; David 40; Solomon, till the building of the Temple, 4; total, 480. The duration of the periods of oppression was not originally given; these numbers were introduced by a later hand, destroying the symmetry of the system.

How long a time actually intervened between the first invasion of Western Palestine by Israelite tribes and the establishment of the kingdom, which may be put, in round numbers, at about 1000 B. C., it is not possible to determine. The date commonly assigned to the Exodus, in the reign of Merneptah, about 1300 B. C., would leave for the whole period of the Judges about two centuries and a half. A recently discovered inscription of this King shows, however, that in his time Israel was settled in the central or northern part of Palestine, and was even then an agricultural people (*Israel is devastated; his seed*—*i. e.* grain —*is destroyed*). Many scholars think that the *Khabiri*, who according to the dispatches of Egyptian officials in Palestine to King Amenophis IV. (about 1400 B. C.) were at that time threatening the continuance of Egyptian authority in the land, were *Hebrew* tribes.

Most, if not all, of the struggles narrated in the Book of Judges probably fall in the latter part of the period, say between 1200 and 1000 B. C.; the state of society depicted in the stories is certainly not that of the first generations after the Invasion. Of the great migration of the northern peoples, who in the reign of Ramses III. (about 1200 B. C.) poured into Syria, overthrew the Hittite Empire, and were only turned back at the borders of Egypt; and of the subsequent campaigns by which Ramses III. re-established the Egyptian supremacy in southern Syria, we find no memory in the Book. Nor do we learn anything

about the time or way in which the Philistines, who first appear among the northern hordes in the inscriptions of Ramses III., established themselves in Palestine. The wars of the great Assyrian King, Tiglath-pileser I., in Euphratene Syria (about 1125 B. C.), were beyond the horizon of the Israelites.

Sources of the Book.

The Book of Judges has come down to us only as a part of a comprehensive History of Israel from the Creation of the World to the Babylonian Exile (Gen.–2 Kings), and, like the other parts of this work, bears the marks of a post-Exilic age. The task of criticism is to discover and, if possible, identify the sources from which the author drew his materials, and to determine in what way he dealt with them. The results of this investigation may be briefly set forth as follows:—

CC. **2**, 6–**16**, 31 are taken, with little change, from a *History of Israel under the Judges* written probably in the 6th century B. C., by an author of the Deuteronomistic school. For this book and its author the symbol D is employed. The Introduction of D is preserved in Jud. **2**, 6–**3**, 6; but it is not probable that it ended with **16**, 31 (or **15**, 20); there is, on the contrary, some evidence that it included at least the times of Eli and Samuel. The stories of the exploits of the Judges in D were ultimately derived from two considerably older historical works, which seem, in their turn, to have drawn directly from the stream of popular tradition. One of these may have been written in the 9th century B. C.; the other is somewhat younger. The former is with considerable probability identified with the *Judaic History* which is one of the main sources of the Hexateuch (J); the latter with the *Ephraimitic History* (E). D did not himself combine these two narratives, but found them already united by an earlier compiler (RJE), whose work (JE), commonly called *Prophetical Narrative*, composed in the 7th century, was perhaps D's only authority for the period. JE, if not J and E separately, survived by the side of D until some time after the Exile (the latter part of the 5th or the beginning of the 4th century), when the author of the present Book of Judges drew upon it to supplement D's work, prefixing **1**, 1–**2**, 5, and cc. **17**. **18** and **19**–**21**—the last named chapters with considerable additions of his own, or at least of post-Exilic origin. See further below, p. 47, ll. 10 ff., and pp. 52–54.

Explanation of the Colors.

In the foregoing translation these sources of the Book of Judges are represented by colors as follows:

Parts derived from J are printed black, without any colored background (*e. g.* **1**, 5–7).

DARK BLUE (*e. g.* **4**, 6) is employed for E.

LIGHT BLUE (*e. g.* **2**, 6) represents later additions to E (E^2).

DARK PURPLE (*e. g.* **10**, 1) is used for JE, that is for those parts of the work in which J and E are so intimately fused that they cannot be separated by analysis.

LIGHT PURPLE (*e. g.* **7**, 2) for additions of the redactor or editor of J and E (RJE) who interwove the two documents with one another.

GREEN (*e. g.* **2**, 7) for D, which in many cases overlies RJE.

YELLOW (*e. g.* **1**, 4) for the additions of the post-Exilic author or editors.

ITALICS indicate the latest strata of the respective documents (*e. g.* **8**, 26; **3**, 12; cc. **20**. **21**); especially redactional changes or additions, made in the process of uniting and harmonizing different sources (*e. g.* **4**, 7; **5**, 1; **7**, 20), or in

adjusting the narrative to the point of view of the editor (*e. g.* 1, 8; 6, 18; 9, 22; 13, 19; c. 14) or glossator (*e. g.* 17, 2. 4), or under the influence of a parallel passage (*e. g.* 6, 39; 10, 3; 19, 24). Some of these latest additions to the text might have been treated as glosses (*e. g.* 3, 1. 2; 15, 5); but as a rule words and clauses have been removed to the foot of the page only when there was some external evidence, such as the omission of the words in the Ancient Versions (*e. g.* 7, 6), or grammatical irregularity (*e. g.* 3, 24; 7, 14; 8, 4; 16, 41), or misplacement, the marginal note having been inserted in the text in a false connection (*e. g.* 3, 17).

Notes on 1, 1–2, 5.

The section 1, 1–2, 5, although a comparatively late addition to the Book of Judges, is derived in the main from a very ancient source; it preserves, in fact, the fragmentary remains of the Judaic (J) narrative of the Conquest of Canaan. According to this account, the Israelite tribes invaded the land singly, or in groups, as the bond of kindred, proximity, or common interest united them; the movements of Judah and its allies (Simeon, Caleb, the Kenites) in the South, of the Josephite tribes in the Central Highlands (Mount Ephraim), and of the northern tribes in Galilee, being quite independent of one another. The conquest of the land was at first far from complete; the tribes north of the Great Plain were able to do little more than find settlements for themselves among the older inhabitants, while even the stronger tribes south of the Plain succeeded only in occupying the Highlands, the Canaanites by means of their war chariots maintaining possession of the plains and broad valleys. The fortified cities, with few exceptions, defied the invaders. The conquests of Judah were separated from those of Joseph by a chain of strongholds with Jerusalem in its centre, which remained in the hands of the Canaanites till the time of Saul and David (*i. e.* about 1000 B. C.); the cities along the line of the Great Plain, from Beth-shean near the Jordan to Dor on the sea-coast, shut up Ephraim and Manasseh in their mountains, and separated them from Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, in Galilee. The history of Israel in the time of the Judges is in many ways determined by these conditions. The overthrow of these barriers, the creation of a United Israel, was the work of the early monarchy.

This account of the Conquest is strikingly at variance with that which we have in the Book of Joshua. In the latter, Israel invades Palestine in one great army, under command of Joshua. Two campaigns, two decisive battles (Josh. 10. 11), achieve the conquest of the whole country, from the mountains on the Edomite border in the south to Mount Hermon in the north (see Josh. 11, 15–23). In these wars the entire population of the land was ruthlessly extirpated (10, 40; 11, 11. 14. 21). The land was then allotted to the several tribes, who had nothing to do but to take possession of their respective territories (13 ff.). That this representation is unhistorical needs no demonstration; the history of the times of the Judges and of the early kingdom proves that many generations elapsed after the invasion before Israel was in full possession of the land; and that, far from being extirpated at one stroke, the Canaanites remained for centuries by the side of the Israelites, and disappeared at last by gradual absorption in the dominant population. In all this, the subsequent history confirms the general truthfulness of the representation in Jud. 1.

Unfortunately, this oldest account of the Conquest has not been preserved complete, but only in an abridgment adapted by the editor to his own purpose and point of view. In vv. 1-21, narrating the conquests of Judah and its kindred and allied clans in the south, the order has been deranged by the transposition of v. 20, which in the original context stood before v. 10 (*cf.* Josh. 15,13), and of vv. 19.21 (or 21.19) which followed v. 7. The beginning of the story of Adoni-bezek seems to have been omitted; a clause or two from it may be preserved in v. 4, which as a whole is editorial. The beginning of the account of Caleb's achievements has been altered in such a way as to attribute them to Judah (v. 10a), the original introduction being removed to v. 20. To the hand of an editor are also to be ascribed v. 8 and v. 18 (the capture of Jerusalem, and conquest of the seaboard by Judah), which contradict v. 21 and v. 19; and probably v. 9. V. 1a, which puts the invasion and conquest as related in 1 *after the death of Joshua*, is also editorial (*cf.* **2**,6 ff.). In the rest of the chapter, relating the conquests of Joseph (vv. 22-29) and of the northern tribes (vv. 30-33), and the failure of Dan to get a foothold in the region where it first sought to establish itself (vv. 34.35), the editor seems to have confined himself to abridging his source; v. 36 appears to be mutilated at the end. But the rebuke which the Messenger of JHVH administers to Israel at Bochim for sparing the Canaanites, and the sentence he pronounces (**2**,1b-5a) are an addition by the editor, and disclose the motive with which he prefixed c. 1 to the Book.

Fragments of the same ancient source are preserved also in the Book of Joshua: see Josh. **15**,14-19; **15**,63; **16**,10; **17**,11-13; **13**,13; **19**,47 (LXX); **17**,14-18.

(1) Formula of the final editor of the Historical Books (see p. 46, l. 7), marking the beginning of the Book of Judges; *cf.* Josh. **1**,1. Jud. **1** is not, however, a sequel to the Book of Joshua, describing a second conquest or re-conquest of the land, but an independent account of the invasion and settlement of Western Palestine by the Israelite tribes, parallel to the Book of Joshua (see above, p. 47, l. 32, and below, note on **2**,6 ff.). What originally preceded 1b is lost. **1,1**

(2) The tribes, which are supposed to be encamped together in the valley of the Jordan, near Jericho (v. 16) and Gilgal (**2**,1), consult the oracle to determine which shall begin the invasion of the interior.

Canaanites, in J the collective name for the inhabitants of Western Palestine.

(3) Judah and Simeon formed, with Reuben and Levi, a distinct group of tribes (Leah). The pastures and settlements of Simeon were in the south of Judah; *cf.* v. 17, and see Josh. **19**,1-9; **15**,26-32.42; 1 Chr. **4**,24-43. **3**

(4) It is assumed that the region in which each tribe, or group of tribes, was to seek its fortune, had been determined, probably by the sacred lot, before the actual invasion began; a representation which can hardly be deemed historical.

(5) The name Adoni-bezek is of anomalous formation; it is a probable conjecture that in the original context of J he was called *Adoni-zedek*, King of Jerusalem (*cf.* 7b; Josh. **10**,3). **5**

(6) The *Bezek* of 1 Sam. **11**,8, now *Khirbet Ibziq*, fourteen or fifteen miles NE of *Nâbulus* (Shechem), cannot be the place meant here. If the text be sound, we must suppose that there was another Bezek, nearer Jerusalem.

(7) The *Perizzites* are frequently mentioned in the catalogues of the nations of Canaan (see Deut. **7**,1); and, as here, by the side of the Canaanites (Gen. **13**,7; **34**,30; J).

(8) If the following verse is a late and unhistorical addition to the narrative of J (see next note), 7b must mean that his own people took him (home) to **7**

Jerusalem, where he died,—a possible, but not very natural interpretation of the words. The alternative is to suppose that 7^b is itself an addition to the original text. 1

(9) This verse contradicts v. 21 and Josh. **15**, 63. Jerusalem was a Jebusite city (**19**, 11 f.) till it was taken by David (2 Sam. **5**, 6-9). 8

(10) V. 9 is a general introduction to the following description of the conquests. The *Mountains* are the Central Highlands, the backbone of Southern Palestine, attaining their greatest elevation near Hebron; the *Negeb* (or 'Barrens,' AV *the South*) is the steppe region in the South, between the mountains of Judah and the steep transverse ridges now named the Mountains of the Azazimeh, by which it is separated from the level desert; the *Lowlands* (Heb. *shephelâh*, AV *the plain*) are the ranges of hills, intersected by broad and fertile valleys, between the mountains and the coast-plain of Philistia. The fourth region of Judah, the *Wilderness*, the rocky steeps in which the mountains fall off to the east to the level of the Dead Sea (1300 feet below the Mediterranean), is mentioned in v. 16. 9

(11) The account of the taking of Hebron and Debir is found in a more original form in Josh. **15**, 13 ff.: the Israelites give Hebron to Caleb, who drives out the three giants (*Sons of Anak*), Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. Thence he goes against Debir, &c. In the redaction of Judges, the conquest of Hebron is attributed to Judah, which afterwards gives the captured city to Caleb (v. 20); but the confusion about the subject of v. 11 and the conflict between v. 10^b and v. 20^b remain as evidence of the older representation. 10

The words *the older name of Hebron was Kirjath Arba* are a gloss; but may have been introduced by the editor to whom the other changes in the verse are due. V. 11^b is a similar gloss.

(12) *Debir*, probably the modern *ed-Dâhariyeh*, four or five hours SW of Hebron, on the way to Beersheba, on the border between the Hill-country and the *Negeb* (see note 10).—*Kirjath-sepher*, see note 11, end. 11

(13) *Younger* (not in Josh. **15**, 17) is a gloss, to explain that the disparity in age was not so great as might be inferred from the relation of uncle and niece. 13

(14) The form shows that these are Canaanite proper names of places, meaning, perhaps, Upper and Lower Basin. Probably the groups of springs in *Seil ed-Dilbeh* are meant. 15

(15) *Cf.* **4**, 11. The *Kenites* were a branch of the Amalekite stock. They had settlements in the *Negeb* on the south of Judah, part of which was called by their name (1 Sam. **27**, 10; *cf.* **30**, 29), but were at least semi-nomadic, roaming with Amalek in the southern deserts (1 Sam. **15**, 6). Unlike the Amalekites, they lived on friendly terms with Israel (see the passages cited above); only Num. **24**, 21 f. breathes a different spirit. In J it seems that Moses was connected by marriage with this people, and that Hobab, his father-in-law, guided Israel through the desert (Num. **10**, 29-32). (In E Moses' father-in-law is Jethro, the Midianite.) According to our verse, the family of Hobab accompanied Judah in the Invasion, and then, wandering farther to the south, joined the Amalekites. Another family of the clan is found in the north (**4**, 11). 16

The *Palm City* is Jericho, Deut. **34**, 3; 2 Chron. **28**, 15. The palms of Jericho, celebrated in antiquity, have now entirely disappeared.

The *Amalekites* were the wild Bedouins of the southern deserts, bearing a reputation much like that of the modern Azazimeh in the same region; see further, note on **6**, 3.

Arad (Num. **21**, 1) is believed to be *Tel 'Arad*, 16 miles south of Hebron.

(16) *Zephath* only here; *Hormah*, Num. **21**, 3; 1 Sam. **30**, 30; Josh. **15**, 30; **19**, 4; &c.; the site is unknown. The name *Hormah* probably signified *Inviolable, Holy City*; the author interprets it *Devoted City*. 17

(17) V. 18, which ascribes to Judah the conquest of the coast-plain, conflicts with vv. 19 and 34; *cf.* **3**, 3 and Josh. **13**, 3. It is, as the diction also shows, an editorial addition of the same kind as v. 8. 1, 18

(18) VV. 19. 21 probably stood, in the original context, immediately after v. 7, either in this order or perhaps 7. 21. 19. The *Plain* is, as in v. 34, the coast-plain, west of Judah. 19

(19) V. 20 originally preceded v. 10; see note on the latter verse, and *cf.* Josh. **15**, 13 ff. 20

The three giants; often misunderstood: *Sons of* (a giant named) *Anak*.

(20) See note on v. 19. In Josh. **15**, 63, where this verse occurs otherwise *verbatim*, we find, in place of the *Benjamites*, the *Judahites*, which is doubtless original. Benjamin is substituted in Jud. in conformity with the theory of the partition of the land which included Jerusalem within the borders of that tribe. 21

(21) Including Benjamin, and perhaps Issachar, as well as Ephraim and Manasseh. 22

(22) *Luz*, Gen. **28**, 19; **35**, 6; Josh. **18**, 13; &c. 23

(23) See note on **3**, 3. The site of the northern Luz is unknown. 26

(24) *Beth-shean*, *cf.* Josh. **17**, 16. It is the modern *Beisân*, commanding the passage from the Jordan Valley to the Great Plain.—*Taanach* (Ta'anuk; see the full page illustration facing p. 10, in which the village of Ta'anuk is seen on the top of the middle hill in the background) and *Megiddo* (Lejjûn), frequently named together, lie on the main road along the southern edge of the Plain, the latter commanding also one of the principal passages from the sea-coast into the Plain.—*Ibleam* (Bel'ameh) lies on the main road from the Plain south to Samaria, and near another of the chief routes from the coast.—*Dor* (Tantûrah), on the sea-coast, south of Carmel.—These cities, occupying strategic positions, separated the tribes of Joseph, in the Central Highlands, from the Great Plain, and from the tribes which lay north of it in Galilee; they were not all in the possession of Israelites till after the establishment of the kingdom. 27

(25) A system of compulsory labor (*corvée*) upon public works or in the king's service (1 Kings **9**, 15. 20 ff.; **5**, 13 f.), such as the Israelites themselves were subjected to in Egypt. 28

(26) *Cf.* Josh. **16**, 10, where the original text of J is more completely preserved. *Gezer*, on the SW border of Ephraim, still independent in David's time, was conquered by the Egyptians in the reign of Solomon, and presented to his queen, Pharaoh's daughter (1 K. **9**, 15–17). It is the modern *Tel Jezer*, between *'Amwâs* (Nicopolis) and *'Âqir* (Ekron). 29

(27) Zebulun settled in the western part of Lower Galilee; the places named have not been identified. 30

(28) See note 25.

(29) Asher settled the *Hinterland* of the Phœnician coast (*cf.* **5**, 17).—*Accho*, in New Testament times named *Ptolemais* (Acts **21**, 7), modern *'Akkâ* (Acre), on the coast north of the headland of Carmel.—*Achzib*, now *ez-Zîb*, between Acre and Tyre.—*Ahlab*, *Helbah* (possibly variants of the same name), *Aphik*, and *Rehob* are still unidentified. The first was probably on the coast, the last two further inland. 31

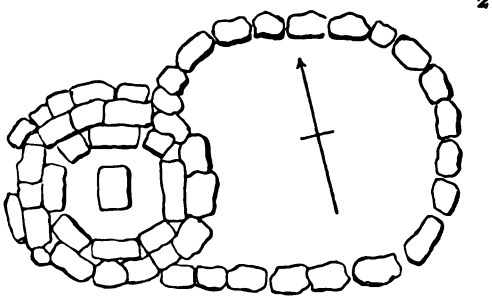
(30) *Naphtali* settled in the eastern part of Upper Galilee, north of Zebulun and Issachar, and east of Asher.—*Beth-anath*, which had its name from the worship of the goddess Anath (*cf.* note on **3**, 31), may be the modern *'Ainîtha*, six miles NW of Kedesh in Naphtali. The site of *Beth-shemesh*, sacred to the Sun, is not known. 33

(31) *Cf.* v. 19; Josh. **17**, 16. The Danites first tried to establish themselves on the southwest of Ephraim; but succeeded in occupying only a small district around Zorah and Eshtaol (cc. **13**–**16**). The greater part of the tribe afterwards 35

migrated to the head-waters of the Jordan, where they conquered Laish, and renamed it Dan (cc. **17.18**; Josh. **19**,47 f.).—The *Amorites* are the native population of Western Palestine, who in the preceding part of the chapter are called Canaanites. The change of name here has not been satisfactorily explained.— *Har-heres* seems to be the same as Beth-shemesh (1 Kings **4**,9, &c.) or Ir-shemesh (Josh. **19**,41), the modern *'Ain Shems*.—*Aijalon*, now *Yâlô*, is about two miles east of *'Amwâs*. The two places command the descent from the hills to the plain by Wadies *Çurâr* and *Selmân*.—*Shaalbim* is not identified. 1

(32) The *Edomites* adjoined the territory of Judah on the southeast.—The *Akrabbim Pass* ('Scorpion Pass'), probably *Naqb eç-Çafâ*, by which the main road from Edom to Hebron ascends.—The later Nabatean capital, *Petra*, with which *Sela* is generally identified, is much too far south to be the place meant in our text, which we should look for near the southern end of the Dead Sea; perhaps in *eç-Çâfieh*. It is doubtful whether the end of the verse is intact. 36

(33) *The Messenger of JHVH*, the appearance of JHVH Himself, usually in human form; a theophany; *cf.* **6**,11 ff.; **13**,3 ff. and the note on Is. **63**,9.—*Gilgal*, in the Jordan valley near Jericho, the standing camp of the Israelites after they first crossed the river. The name was probably given it from an old stone circle or cromlech.—*To Beth-el*, in the times of the kingdom one of the most famous sanctuaries in Central Palestine. The original sequel of these words was v. 5b, *and they offered sacrifice there to JHVH*. The theophany marked the spot as a holy place of JHVH; it was inaugurated by sacrifice. **2**,1



PALESTINIAN CROMLECH.

(34) With the following reproof of the Messenger *cf.* **6**,7–10; **10**,11–16; 1 Sam. **7**,3 f.; **10**,17–19; **12**,6–25. It is made up of reminiscences of older texts; *cf.* v. 2 with Exod. **34**,13 f.; **23**,21 f.; v. 3 with Josh. **23**,13 (itself late); Exod. **34**,12; Deut. **7**,16; &c. The reference to the forefathers is common in Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic editors.

(35) Exod. **34**,13: *Pull down their altars, and break in pieces their (stone) pillars, and hew down their sacred poles.* It has been suspected that the text in Jud. has been accidentally mutilated by a copyist; but it is at least equally possible that it was abridged by the author of the verses. 2

(36) The parallels have a fuller text: *A scourge on your flanks and thorns in your eyes* (Josh. **23**,13); *thorns in your sides* (Num. **33**,55). The received Hebrew text here: *they shall be sides to you.* 3

(37) That is, *Weepers*. *Cf.* the etymological legends attaching themselves to local names in **15**,14–19. The name which is the subject of the *Midrash* in our verse may have been *Bekaim* (*cf.* 2 Sam. **5**,23 f.); *cf.* also *Allon Bacuth* (Gen. **35**,8, below Beth-el), and the *Valley of Baca* (Ps. **84**,6). 5

Notes on 2,6-16,31.

The History of Israel under the Judges covers the period from the death of Joshua (2,8) to that of Samson (16,30 f.). The general character of the times is described in the introduction, 2,6-3,6. No sooner were the Israelites fairly settled in the land than they abandoned the God of their fathers, JHVH, for the worship of the gods of Canaan or of the neighboring nations. For this, JHVH delivered them to their enemies, who subdued and oppressed them. When they were reduced to extremities, He sent a leader, or champion, who freed them from the yoke of their oppressors, only to fall again into the same sins and bring on themselves the same calamities (see above, p. 43, l. 8). The periods of the history are marked by these successive oppressions and deliverances, each of which, as the author does not fail to note, illustrates and confirms the characterization given in the introduction (see 3,7-11.12-15; 4,1 ff.; 6, 1-10; 10,6-16; 13,1). The chronology follows this division: it gives us, in the case of each of the greater Judges, the duration of the oppression which preceded the deliverance, and of the peace and security which succeeded it under the rule of the Judge; and these data were doubtless meant to be understood as continuous. The following conspectus exhibits, therefore, both the outline of the history and the structure of the Book:

Introduction,		2,6-3,6
Oppression by Cushan-rishathaim,	8 years,	
Deliverance by Othniel; peace,	40 years,	3,7-11
Oppression by Eglon, King of Moab,	18 years,	
Deliverance by Ehud; peace,	80 years,	12-30
Shamgar kills 600 Philistines,		31
Oppression by the Canaanites (Jabin and Sisera),	20 years,	
Deliverance by Deborah and Barak; peace,	40 years,	4.5
Oppression by the Midianites,	7 years,	
Deliverance by Gideon; peace,	40 years,	6-8
Abimelech, King in Shechem,	3 years,	9
Tola judges Israel	23 years,	10,1-2
Jair judges Israel	22 years,	3-5
Oppression by the Ammonites,	18 years,	
Deliverance by Jephthah; he judges Israel	6 years,	10,6-12,7
Ibzan judges Israel	7 years,	12,8-10
Elon judges Israel	10 years,	11-12
Abdon judges Israel	8 years,	13-15
Oppression by the Philistines,	40 years,	
Samson vexes the Philistines, and judges Israel	20 years,	13-16

The religious interpretation and judgment of the history in 2,6-3,6 and in the introductions to the stories of the several Judges is in general that of the Deuteronomistic historians, and bears considerable resemblance to the commentary on the history of the monarchy in the Books of Kings (*cf. e. g.* 2 Kings 17,6 ff.). It is plainly intended to impress on the readers of the Book the great lesson that unfaithfulness to the religion of JHVH has for its unvarying consequence national calamities; God withdraws His protection, and leaves Israel a prey to its foes; but with it also the lesson of JHVH's unfailing readiness to come to the help of His people, when in their deep distress they turn to Him. This interpretation of history as God's moral dealing with His people, and the use of it to illustrate and enforce moral and religious lessons, is the fruit of the teaching of the Prophets, and, in this form, has its closest parallels in the Books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and in the Exilic additions to Deuteronomy. The composition of Jud. 2,6-16,31 (often called, from these

peculiarities, the *Deuteronomic Book of Judges*) may therefore with some confidence be ascribed to the 6th century B. C., probably somewhat later than the redaction of the Books of Kings.

Numerous repetitions and slight but appreciable differences of diction and point of view, in the Introduction (**2**,6-**3**,6) and in the introductions to the histories of the several Judges, especially the longer ones, **6**,1-10 and **10**, 6-16, indicate that these parts of the Book are not entirely the work of a single author. Many critics are of the opinion that these phenomena are due, mainly if not wholly, to that kind of interpolation, enlarging upon and emphasizing the original text, to which the Deuteronomistic moralizing, here as in other Books, presented a peculiar temptation; in this work of retouching and heightening, the editor of the present enlarged Book of Judges may have had the chief part. Others think that the Deuteronomistic author himself took as the basis of his work an older collection of Lives of the Judges, in which his way of interpreting and commenting on the history was preformed. Upon the former hypothesis, the alien elements in the introduction and the setting of the stories are later than the composition of the Deuteronomic Book of Judges; upon the latter, they would be older. See above, p. 46.

The stories of Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon and Abimelech, Jephthah, and Samson were not written or rewritten by the Deuteronomistic author, but were taken from older sources; scarcely a trace of D's distinctive literary style or moralizing is to be discovered in them. They remind us of the Prophetical narratives of the lives of the patriarchs in Genesis, and still more closely resemble the histories of Samuel, Saul, and David in the Books of Samuel, with which they are doubtless coeval. Slight differences among the stories in diction and tone might be naturally explained by reference to their ultimate, and not very remote, source in unwritten tradition, and would not prove diversity of literary origin. But the story of Gideon is clearly composite; two originally independent narratives have been combined by a redactor; and the same thing is probably true of more than one of the others. At least two older written sources, therefore, were drawn upon for the histories of the Judges, and in some instances the parallel narratives had been united before they came into the hands of the Deuteronomic author. The similarity of these phenomena to those which exist in the Hexateuch, where the narratives of J and E were united by a pre-Deuteronomic redactor RJ^E, has led to the surmise that in Judges also the two chief sources from which the stories are derived were the works of J and E, which were united by an editor in a pre-Deuteronomic Book of Judges. To this redactor the non-Deuteronomistic elements in the Introduction and the setting of the stories might then be, at least in part, ascribed. The hypothesis receives support from a closer examination of the tales themselves. In the story of Samson some noteworthy resemblances to J in the Hexateuch have been pointed out; in other places, as in **10**,6-16, we are strongly reminded of E. The evidence for the identification of the main sources of Judges with J and E is, however, far from demonstrative; the question is still a disputed one. The same question arises in the Books of Samuel also, part of which seems, at one period in the history of the Books, to have been included in a Book of Judges,—the present division is comparatively late.

Of the so-called *Minor Judges*, Tola, Jair (**10**,1-5), Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (**12**,8-15), we have only brief notices, like extracts from a chronicle, giving the name and clan, the number of years each *judged* Israel, and the place where he was buried, in formulas differing from those by which the histories of the other Judges are introduced and closed. To these standing

data there is added, in some instances, a sentence or two about the numerous posterity, matrimonial alliances, and possessions of the Judge, which are of such a nature as to confirm the conjecture which the names themselves suggest, that these *Judges* are in reality not individuals but clans. Comparison of the set phrases in these verses with 12,7; 15,20; 1 Sam. 4,18; 7,15, has led some critics to infer that the notices of the Minor Judges are ultimately derived from one of the older sources of the Book of Judges. Others are of the opinion that they were invented by the last editor to make up the number of twelve Judges. The question is of importance chiefly in connection with the chronology of the Book. The account of the subjugation of Israel by Cushan-rishathaim and its deliverance by Othniel (3,7-11) consists almost entirely of the characteristic formulas of the Deuteronomistic author, and seems to have been composed by him as a typical example to illustrate his view of the whole history as set forth in 2,6-3,6.—*Shamgar* (3,31) was introduced by a later editor, and is not included in the chronological scheme.

Notes on 2,6-3,6.

This Introduction contains a general survey of the history of the whole period of the Judges (see above, p. 52), which it represents as "an almost rhythmical alternation of idolatry and subjugation, return to JHVH and liberation" (VATKE). The text is not homogeneous, as is proved by the numerous repetitions, and still more conclusively by the conflicting reasons given in 2,20-3,6 for JHVH'S leaving some of the native nations within the limits of Palestine. In 2,23; 3,2a.5 f. we have fragments of J, which may have formed the conclusion of c. 1, explaining why JHVH did not enable the tribes to expel the Canaanites all at once; *cf.* Exod. 23,29 f.; Deut. 7,22 f. The verses have passed through the hands of more than one editor; the catalogue of nations in 3,5b is probably an addition by RJE, to whom also 3,6 may owe its present form. The verses 2,6.8-10 (=Josh. 24,28-30) are beyond doubt from E; the continuation of this source is found in 2,13.20 f., which was probably followed by 3,4. To the author of the Deuteronomistic Book of Judges (D) may be ascribed 2,7.11a.12.14 (in the main).15.18 f.22; 3,1a.3. In these verses, which exhibit throughout the distinctive peculiarities of D's diction and point of view, the history of the whole following period is briefly characterized as a series of apostasies. E, on the contrary, narrates the first defection, after the death of Joshua, with its consequences. The representation of D has been heightened by a later hand in 2,14aβ.16 f. The color given to these verses in the text (YELLOW) signifies only that they were added by a post-Exilic editor, not necessarily the same whose hand is recognized in 1,8.18; 2,1b-5a; a remark which applies also to 3,1b.2b. D appears to have worked upon the basis of E, not to have been combined with it by a third hand.

(1) After the great assembly and solemn renewal of the covenant at Shechem, Josh. 24. VV. 6.8.9=Josh. 24,28-30; the repetition was occasioned by the introduction of Jud. 1,1-2,5. According to this narrative, the land had been completely conquered and divided among the tribes. 2,6

(2) *The great work of JHVH* includes the deliverance from Egypt, the wandering, and the conquest, of all which Joshua's generation had been witnesses; *cf.* Deut. 11,2-7. 7

(3) *Timnath-heres*, in Josh. 24,30; 19,50, corrupted to Timnath-*serah*. It is the modern *Tibneh*, NW of *Jifnâ* (Gophna), on one of the main roads from the coast into the Highlands of Ephraim (Beth-el). On the side of the hill over against the town are remarkable rock-tombs. Local tradition in the Middle 9

Ages fixed on a site nearer Shechem, at *'Awerteh* or *Kefr Hârith*; some recent scholars have revived the latter identification.— *Mount Gaash*, *cf.* 2 Sam. **23**, 30. **2**

(4) The original reference is to the family sepulchre. Like the cognate expressions, *be gathered to his people, go to his fathers, sleep with his fathers*, it becomes a mere circumlocution for *die*. 10

(5) Lit., *did the thing that was evil in the eyes of JHVH*, a standing formula in the introductions to the stories of the several Judges. 11



ROCK-TOMBS OF TIBNEH.

(6) *Baal and Astarte*; *cf.* **10**, 6; 1 Sam. **7**, 4; **12**, 10; see also Jud. **3**, 7. *Baal* means *proprietor, possessor* of something. The Baal of a place, *e. g.* the Baal of Tyre, Sidon, Lebanon, &c., is the god to whom it belongs, just as the citizens of a town are its *ba'alîm* (proprietors, *e. g.* **9**, 2. 3). There were thus innumerable Baals, some of them having a proper name, like *Melqart*, the Baal of Tyre, or some distinctive attribute or title; others distinguished solely by the place where they were worshiped. The Baal of any particular community would ordinarily be spoken of in that community simply as *the* Baal. When we speak of Baal as the principal god of the Canaanites, it is not to be understood that there was one god, Baal, whom all the Canaanites worshiped, but that the many local divinities were all called by this significant name. In the OT the plural is often used, *the Baals*, *i. e.* the gods of Canaan; less frequently, the generic singular, as here.—*Astarte*, Phœnician *'Ashtart*, in the Received Text pronounced *'Ashtóreth*, the great goddess of the Semitic peoples, Babylonian and Assyrian *Ishtar*, Syrian *'Athar*, South Arabian *'Athtar* (masc.). With these names many scholars would connect the Greek Aphrodite. Numerous inscriptions from Phœnicia and its colonies, as well as the testimony of the OT and, in later times, of Greek and Roman writers, show how great a place the worship of this deity had in the religion of the peoples of Canaan. In the OT the plural is frequently used, especially in conjunction with *the Baals*, as equivalent to *goddesses*, a conception for which the Hebrew language has no word. In Assyrian, *Ishtar* (sing. and plur.) is used in a similar way. 13

(7) *Was incensed*, &c., *cf.* 20; **3**, 8; **10**, 7; &c.—*Spoilers*, 16; 1 Sam. **14**, 48; 2 Kings **17**, 20.— *Sold them*, &c., **3**, 8; **4**, 2; **10**, 7; 1 Sam. **12**, 9; &c. 14

(8) The reference is not to any specific threat, but to the whole tenor of the Deuteronomic warnings; see *e. g.*, Deut. **28**, 20. 30–34; *cf.* Is. **30**, 17. 2, 15

(9) The *Judges* are the champions whom JHVH raises up to vindicate and deliver Israel. But as Saul's relief of Jabesh in Gilead made him king, so, in the theory of the compilers and editors of this Book, the Judges, after they had rid their country of its oppressors, ruled it for the rest of their lives. Upon this basis, as has been noted above, the chronology of the Book is based. So, too, the Minor Judges form a regular succession. In vv. 16. 17, accordingly, the Israelites are accused of resisting the efforts of their divinely constituted rulers to reclaim them from their evil way; a somewhat different representation from that of v. 19, according to which they relapsed *at the death* of the Judge.—It is natural enough that the leader in a successful war of liberation, or the hero of some daring exploit, should gain a great authority, which might be formally acknowledged, as in the cases of Gideon and Jephthah; but the error of the editor's theory is that it makes of the heroes of local struggles, deliverers and rulers of all Israel. 16

(10) *Went astray* (or *in faithlessness*); see the note on Lev. **17**, 7 and compare Jud. **8**, 27. 33; Exod. **34**, 15. 16; Deut. **31**, 16; &c. The worship of other gods is described, in a figure which was suggested to Hosea by his own bitter experience (Hos. **1–3**), as the unfaithfulness of a wife who abandons her husband to run after other lovers and prostitute herself to them. 17

(11) VV. 18. 19 set forth succinctly the scheme of the Deuteronomistic Book of Judges, illustrated by the histories of the successive Judges from Othniel to Samson. 18. 19

(12) The verses are the continuation of 6. 8–10. 13 (E). The consequence of Israel's speedy lapse into heathenism upon the death of Joshua was that JHVH determined not to let them complete the subjugation of Palestine; the regions which Joshua had not conquered should remain in the possession of their old inhabitants, partly as a punishment for the defection of that generation, partly as a standing test of Israel's loyalty in the future to JHVH and His religion. The latter motive is declared in v. 22, in terms which are unmistakably Deuteronomistic; and in **3**, 4, which is on this account ascribed to E; see also **3**, 1ª. 20. 21

(13) *JHVH left these peoples*, &c. The words can only refer to something which precedes; if they are correctly attributed to J, they would form a natural close to c. **1**. The second half-verse is a harmonistic addition which does not harmonize. 23

(14) These two parentheses are glosses, probably of the same origin. **3**, 1. 2

(15) The nations of Canaan were to be driven out gradually in order to teach the succeeding generations of Israel the arts of war, and constrain them to cultivate military discipline. Another, perhaps preferable, restoration of the text is: *merely in order that the Israelites might have experience of war*; the sense is not materially different. 2

(16) Many critics think that this list of nations is derived from the same source as **2**, 23ª; **3**, 2ª; but it does not accord with the representation in c. **1**, and has its closest parallel in Jos. **13**, 2 ff. (D).—*The five princes of the Philistines*, see 1 Sam. **6**, 16–18; the rulers of the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, Ekron, in the coast-plain west of Judah.—The *Canaanites*, in E and D particularly the inhabitants of the lowlands of Southwestern Palestine; see Num. **13**, 29; Deut. **1**, 7; Josh. **5**, 1; *cf.* Josh. **13**, 3. 4; 2 Sam. **24**, 7; Zeph. **2**, 5.—The *Phœnicians*, occupying the maritime plain from Mount Carmel north, with the cities of Tyre, Sidon, &c.—*The Hittites, inhabiting the range of Lebanon*; by an accident of transcription which occurs also in Josh. **11**, 3, the Received Text 3

names the *Hivvites*, a petty people of Southern Palestine, whose seats were in 3
the vicinity of Jerusalem (see v. 5a).—*Mount Baal Hermon*, not far from the
sources of the Jordan, was their southern limit; they extended northward in
the Lebanon and Cœle-Syria to the neighborhood of Hamath.

(17) The verses are substantially from J; the catalogue in 5b (differing 5.6
entirely from that in 3) has been supplemented by an editor, as in many similar
cases; *cf.* Deut. 7,1. The Israelites intermarried with these people, and, as a
consequence, adopted their religion; see Exod. 34,16; Deut. 7,3 f.; Josh. 23,12.

Notes on 3,7-11.

The account of the oppression of Israel by the Syrians and its deliverance
by Othniel is Deuteronomistic throughout, written by the author of 2,11 f. 14 f.
18 f., as a typical example. Besides the standing formulas of D and his chronology, it contains only the names of *Othniel* (1,13; Josh. 15,17), and *Cushan-rishathaim, King of Syria on the Euphrates*. The latter is not Mesopotamia, *i. e.*
the whole area included between the Euphrates and the Tigris, from the mountains
of Armenia to the latitude of Babylon, but the much smaller region on the
upper Euphrates, extending eastward perhaps to the Chabôras (*Khâbûr*), and
probably including also a strip of varying breadth on the west side of the river.
Cushan occurs elsewhere only as the name of a nomadic tribe cognate to Midian
(Hab. 3,7; *cf.* Num. 12,1). A Syrian invasion from which the Israelites were
delivered by Othniel, whose seats were at Debir in the extreme south, is too
improbable to be accepted without better attestation than it possesses. If the
verses have any historical basis, it may be surmised that it was an account
of an inroad of the Bedouins from the Southeast (*Cushan*), repulsed by the
Kenizzites of Debir (Othniel). It has been further suggested that *Syria*, Heb.
Aram (v. 10) may have arisen, by a confusion of which there are many other
instances in the OT, from an original *Edom* (GRÄTZ); *Syria on the Euphrates*,
Heb. *Aram-naharáim* (*cf.* the title of Ps. 60), in v. 8 would then be a second
stage in the progress of the error. See also p. 90, l. 22.

(1) *The Baals and the Asherahs*; see note on 2,13. *Asherah* stands beside 7
Baal here precisely as Astarte does elsewhere (2,13; 10,6; 1 Sam. 7,4; 12,10),
and must be, as in 1 Kings 18,19; 2 Kings 23,4, the name of a divinity. In by far the greater number of passages, however, the *asheráh* (appellative) is the sacred post or pole which stood at the place of worship (see note on 6,25). Such sacred poles are frequently represented on ancient Oriental seal-cylinders as shown in the accompanying engraving. These poles were not the symbols of any particular divinity, *e. g.* Astarte; they were erected beside the altars of JHVH as well as Baal; and there is good reason to doubt whether a goddess Asherah ever existed, except as the sacred pole itself was an object of worship.



ASHERAH AND SACRED TREE.

(2) *Cushan-rishathaim* is so pronounced in the Received Text as to make 8
the name mean 'Cushan of twofold-wickedness'; *cf.* Bera and Birsha, Gen. 14,2.

(3) *The spirit of JHVH*, see 11,29; 6,34; 13,25; 14,6; 15,14; 1 Sam. 10
11,6. Induing him, as God's champion, with superhuman might and courage.
He vindicated Israel = conquered their right. The Hebrew verb is the same
from which the noun *Judge* is derived; the Judge, in this Book, is one 'who
vindicates his country from a tyrant.' See further 1 Sam. 8,20.

(4) After this victory the land enjoyed security under the rule of Othniel 3,11
until his death; *cf.* **2**, 18.—*Forty years*, a whole generation; see above, p. 45, l. 10 ff.

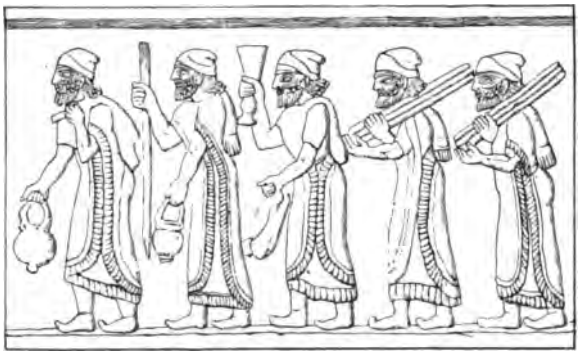
Notes on 3, 12-30.

The introduction and conclusion of the story (12-15. 28-30) are the work of D. The concrete facts, such as the Moabite occupation of Jericho (13^b), the sending of the tribute to Eglon by Ehud (15^b), and the seizure of the fords (28^b), are, of course, derived from the story itself, the original beginning and end of which have been supplanted by D's pragmatic scheme. Traces of the hand of the pre-Deuteronomistic editor may also be discovered in the verses. The story itself bears no marks of Deuteronomistic redaction. The Moabites, whose territory lay east of the Dead Sea, and, except when Israel was strongest on that side of the Jordan, as in the days of Omri and Ahab, reached to the Jordan opposite Jericho (the *Steppes of Moab*), crossed the river, captured Jericho, and occupied its fertile plain. From the story itself it does not appear that their power extended beyond this into the mountains behind. The Benjamites were the sufferers by this invasion; and it was a Benjamite who, by a bold stroke, rid them of the tyrant. The Deuteronomistic author, as in other cases, transforms the local struggle into the subjugation and liberation of all Israel.

The exploits of the tribal hero were, doubtless, preserved in memory and often retold at the sanctuary of the tribe at Gilgal. The story, as we read it, shares the general character of the oldest narratives in the Book, and is therefore ascribed to J, to whom some slight indications in the language also point. It may have been retouched in some places by later hands; but the attempt to separate it into two strands (J and E) is not convincing.

(1) On the *Ammonites* see note on **11**, 4; on the *Amalekites*, notes on 13
1, 16; **6**, 3. (2) *The Palm City* = Jericho; see **1**, 16.

(3) *Gera* is the name of a Benjamite clan (Gen. **46**, 21; 2 Sam. **16**, 5; &c.).— 15
A man who had not the use of his right hand, *cf.* **20**, 16. The etymology of the Hebrew word suggests that the hand was shrunken in consequence of an injury; in the later language, however, the phrase means no more than *left-handed*, and that is perhaps all that is intended here. It was by taking advantage of this bodily defect that Ehud succeeded in his plan.



ISRAELITES BEARING TRIBUTE.

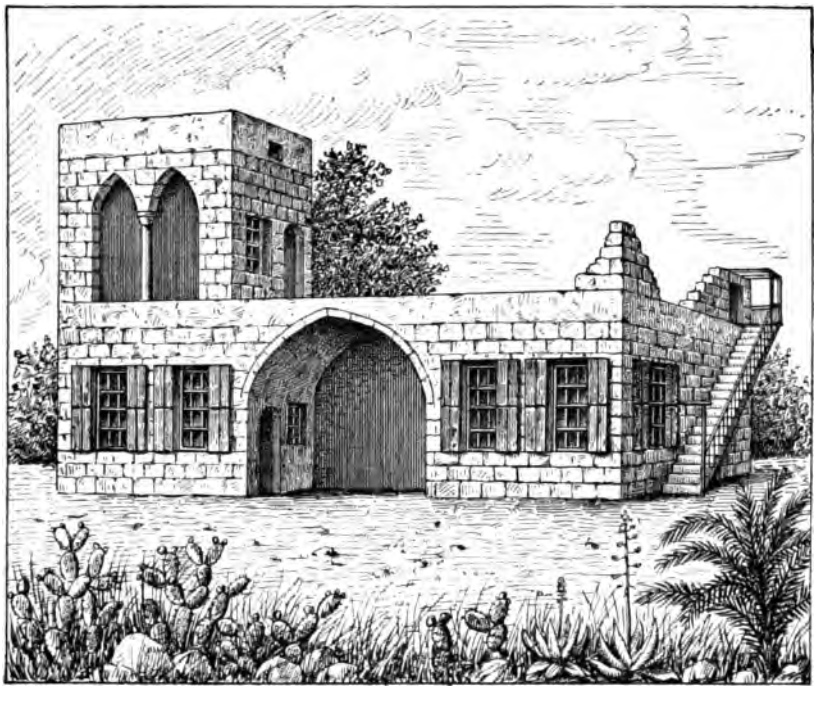
(4) The weapon 16
which he made for the purpose was a long and heavy dagger, measuring thirteen or fourteen inches in the blade; sharp on both edges, and without guard or cross-piece (v. 22).

(5) The tribute was 18
paid in the products of the land, and a considerable number of bearers was doubtless necessary. Our engraving, from the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser II (B. C. 860-824) represents the tribute brought to the Assyrian king by Jehu of Israel (B. C. 842).

(6) We are to suppose that Ehud accompanied the bearers on their return 3, 19
to this point; then, leaving them to pursue their journey, retraced his steps alone to Eglon's residence. *The sculptured stones near Gilgal* were perhaps roughly carved standing stones, the intermediate stage between the rude stone and the idol. From v. 26 it has been inferred that they marked the limit of the Moabite occupation in this direction, once beyond which, Ehud was safe from pursuit. They are not mentioned elsewhere.

(7) *And said*, &c. We are to imagine that when he returned, Ehud sent word to the King that he had a matter to communicate to him which required secrecy; the King dismissed his attendants, and Ehud was admitted to his presence as he sat alone in his upper story. The words would connect better with the end of v. 18: *He dismissed the bearers, and said*, &c. *Cf.* however, Ex. **18**, 6. 7.

(8) The *upper story* in Oriental houses is raised above the roof at one 20
corner, or upon a tower-like annex to the building, and contains usually only



UPPER STORY OF AN ORIENTAL HOUSE.

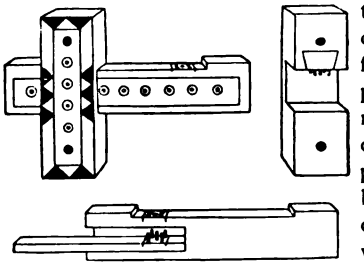
one room, through which windows on all sides allow the air to circulate freely; *cf.* 1 Kings **17**, 19. 23; 2 Kings **4**, 10 f.; (in palaces) 2 Kings **1**, 2; Jer. **22**, 13 f.; also Acts **1**, 13; **9**, 37. 39; **20**, 8.

(9) Ehud's secret is *a divine communication*, whether by oracle, seer, or prophet, which concerns the king. Eglon reverently rises from his seat at this announcement, and in doing so gives Ehud his opportunity.

(10) The words, *Eglon was a very fat man*, which in the Received Text 22
stand in v. 17, are perhaps a misplaced marginal gloss. Not only the long blade, but the hilt also, was buried in his belly.

(11) The word omitted in translation was probably the name of some part 23
of the building (*porch, gallery*?) through which Ehud passed in his exit.

(12) The lock was doubtless like those now in use in the East, so constructed that the bolt was shot by the hand or by a thong; the key was only used for unlocking the door. *Cf.* the note on Isaiah **22**, 22. 3,25



MODERN SYRIAN LOCK.

(13) *The sculptured stones*; see note 6 above. Here, as well as in v. 19, the clause is not without difficulty, but this may be due to our ignorance of the topography. The site of *Seirah* is unknown; from the context it appears that it was in the mountains. The residence of the King was probably not at Jericho, 26 but on the other side of the Jordan. If it were quite sure that v. 19^{aa} and v. 26^{ba} were part of the original narrative, this would be certain; for the way from Jericho to the land of Benjamin or the Highlands of Ephraim does not pass by Gilgal, which lies in the opposite direction, between Jericho and the fords of the Jordan.

(14) Compare chapter **12**, verse 5. 28

Note on 3,31.

(1) **4**,1 ignores Shamgar, connecting immediately with **3**,30. Shamgar is often reckoned as the first of the (six) *Minor Judges*; but the brief story of his exploit has no resemblance to **10**,1-5; **12**,8-15, and no place in the chronological scheme. The verse is one of the latest additions to the Book. 31

The name, *Shamgar ben-Anath*, is probably derived from **5**,6; the story of the slaughter of the Philistines reminds us of Samson (*cf.* especially **15**,14 ff.), and still more of one of David's heroes, Shammah ben-Agee (2 Sam. **23**,11 f.). As a Philistine fighter Shamgar comes too soon. *Anath* is the name of a goddess who was widely worshiped in Palestine and north of it (*cf.* note on **1**,33).

The Syrian ox-goad is a very good substitute for a spear, being a stout staff six or eight feet long armed at one end with a spike.

Notes on Chapters 4.5.

The war with the Canaanites and the defeat and death of Sisera are the subject of the Triumphal Ode, c. **5**, as well as of the prose narrative, c. **4**. The poem is much the older of the two, and the prose version is manifestly dependent upon it. The discrepancies between them are to be attributed in part, perhaps, as in the description of the death of Sisera, to misunderstanding of the poem, but chiefly to the union in c. **4** of the story of Sisera with an originally independent story of a war with Jabin, King of Hazor. Sisera, who in the ode is at the head of the Kings of Canaan, is in **4**,2.7 only the general of Jabin, the King of Canaan. It is easy, as usual, to recognize D's introduction and close (**4**,1-4.23 f.), in which material derived from the story itself (*e.g.* in vv. 3.4) and perhaps traces of the older setting are incorporated. V. 5 seems to be a late editorial gloss to v. 4; *cf.* 1 Sam. **7**, 16 f. The stories of Jabin and Sisera were probably united, not by D, but by an older compiler (R^{JE}), to whom, in this case, the harmonistic device which makes Sisera Jabin's general

is to be ascribed. Jabin has no part in the action; and it is difficult to determine what may have led to the connection of his history with that of Sisera, or what elements in vv. 6-22 are derived from it. The theatre of the war with Sisera was the valley of the Kishon, near Mount Tabor (*cf.* notes on 4,6.7); his city, Harosheth, is generally identified with *Hârithiyeh*, at the western gateway to the Great Plain from the coast. Hazor, Jabin's city, on the contrary, is far away in Upper Galilee. Kedesh in Naphtali, Barak's home (v. 6) and the rendezvous of the tribesmen whom he led to the war (v. 10), in the neighborhood of which Jael's tent was pitched (v. 11; *cf.* v. 17), is a little way north of Hazor. Sisera's flight from the battle-field to this remote point can hardly be imagined; and it has been thought improbable that it would be chosen as the rendezvous of forces gathered to attack the Canaanites in the Plain, or that Zebulun and Naphtali only, and not the tribes about the Plain, should have been raised for such a war. Some critics have inferred, therefore, that these features of the story were brought in by association with the story of Jabin of Hazor; in the original story of Sisera, another Kedesh, nearer the scene of action (in Issachar), may have been named as Barak's home.

The narrative clearly implies that Jael's tent, in which Sisera sought refuge, was not very far from the field of battle; the clauses in v. 11 and v. 17 which seem to put it forty miles or more away, near Kedesh and Hazor, cannot belong to this source. The other inference is not so certain; in the Ode also Zebulun and Naphtali play a distinguished part, and a commander planning to occupy Mount Tabor by a sudden movement, might well assemble his force of hardy hill-men at a more remote point. In the text, therefore, vv. 6-22 are ascribed as a whole to one source, and the clauses which conflict with its representation are treated as editorial additions, whether directly derived from the story of Jabin, or suggested by the connection with it established in 1-4.23 f. Some slight stylistic indications point to E, rather than J, as the source of the story of Sisera; decisive marks are lacking.

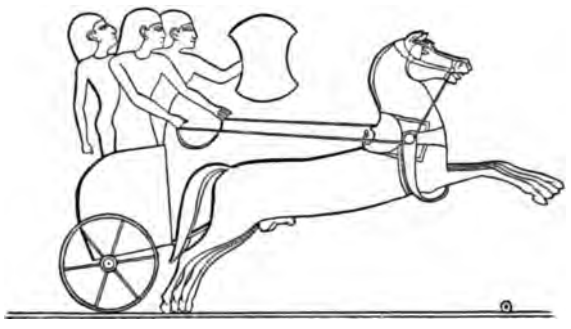
Notes on Chapter 4.

(1) In Josh. 11, Jabin, king of Hazor, is the head of the Canaanite confederacy in the north, whose armies Joshua destroyed in the decisive battle by the Waters of Merom, achieving at one stroke the conquest of all Palestine north of the Great Plain. Jabin thus plays in the conquest of the north the same part which Adoni-zedek does in the south; and as the account of Joshua's victory over the latter in Josh. 10 appears to be based upon J's narrative of the conquests of Judah in Jud. 1 (Adoni-bezek), so, it may be conjectured, Josh. 11 is dependent on the older story of Jabin, a fragment of which is preserved in Jud. 4, which may also have been taken from J. Jabin, King of Hazor (Jud. 4,17; Josh. 11,1), has become for D *the King of Canaan* (*cf.* v. 23), who oppressed all Israel.—*Hazor* (see 1 Kings 9,15; 2 Kings 15,29, and especially 1 Macc. 11,67 ff.) probably stood on one of the hills west of the lake *el-Ḥûleh*; perhaps on *Jebel Ḥadireh*, three miles SSW of Kedesh (*Qades*), near the modern village of *Deishûn*. 4,2

(2) The identification of Harosheth with Ḥârithîyeh (see above, l. 5) is possible only if the story of Sisera is independent of that of Jabin. The positive arguments for it, beyond the similarity of the names, which may be accidental, are not very conclusive.

(3) The chariots belong to Sisera; see vv. 13.16; 5,28. As represented on the Egyptian monuments, the Syrian chariots regularly carry three men, the driver, the warrior, and his shield-bearer. At the battle of Megiddo, near the scene of Sisera's defeat, Thothmes III. (about 1500 B. C.) captured from the 3

allied Syrian kings nine hundred and twenty-four chariots and over two thousand horses. 4



HITTITE CHARIOT.

(4) *A prophetess*, an inspired woman; *cf.* Exod. **15**, 20.—*Was judging Israel.* This is the meaning of the words as given in the Received Text, and as interpreted in the verse following. Comparison with **3**, 10 makes it probable that the author intended a preterit: *she vindicated Israel*, delivered it; see notes on **2**, 16 and **3**, 10. 4

(5) There was a Tomb of Deborah below Beth-el (Gen. **35**, 8), where, according to the patriarchal legend, Rebekah's nurse was buried, beneath a sacred tree (*Allon-bachuth*) whose name was by popular etymology supposed to commemorate the weeping for Deborah. It was probably this Deborah Tree, together, perhaps, with a reminiscence of 1 Sam. **7**, 16 f., which led the author of v. 5 to fix the home of the prophetess in the heart of the Highlands of Ephraim. From **5**, 15[a] it has been with good reason inferred that she was of the tribe of Issachar. 5

Ramah is the modern *er-Râm*, two hours north of Jerusalem; see **19**, 13.

(6) On Kedesh see above, p. 61, l. 7 ff., and below, l. 43. 6

(7) Mount Tabor, now *Jebel et-Tôr*, at the head of the northern arm of the Great Plain, was from its situation and natural strength a most advantageous position for the Israelites in a war with the Canaanites in the Plain. Its summit is a platform on which a considerable army could encamp, and could not be easily taken by assault. The picture facing p. 8 shows, on the right hand in the foreground, the summit of Mount Tabor; the view is toward the north, with Mount Hermon in the distance on the left.

(8) The Kishon (see p. 63) drains the Great Plain, flowing in general parallel to the range of Carmel, and emptying into the Mediterranean at Haifâ. Its northern branch rises west of Mount Tabor. 7

(9) Barak's refusal to go alone is generally interpreted as a sin of little faith, for which he is punished by losing the crowning honor of the victory, the destruction of Sisera himself; but it is by no means evident that this was in the mind of the author. 8.9

(10) This verse prepares us to understand vv. 17 ff., and is introduced here in order that it may not be necessary to interrupt the description of the battle and flight to make this explanation. If Kedesh is the city of that name in Naphtali, as the author of v. 17[b] supposes, the whole of v. 11 must belong, not to the story of Sisera, but to that of Jabin; and in v. 17 the words *the wife of Heber, the Kenite*, must be attributed to an editor, as a harmonistic device similar to that which makes Sisera Jabin's general, while v. 17[b] might in that case be derived from the story of Jabin. We could then only imagine that in the original history of Jabin the leader of the enemy met at the tents of Heber a fate similar to that which overtook Sisera at the hands of Jael. If v. 11 comes from the principal narrator (E), as is assumed in the text, the Kedesh meant must be sought in or near the Great Plain. *Tel Abû-Qudês*, between Taanach and Megiddo, would meet the requirements of the story, as far as we can be sure that we understand them. 11

The words *from the Sons of Hobab*, &c., appear to be a gloss from **1**, 16.

(11) See notes on vv. 1 (p. 61, l. 3 ff.). 2. 7. 4, 13

(12) Exod. **14**, 24; **23**, 27; Josh. **10**, 10; 1 Sam. **7**, 10. 15

(13) See note on v. 11. 17

(14) So the oldest Version; the exact meaning of the word is unknown. As the object was concealment, this interpretation is more probable than *wrap, coverlet*, generally adopted by subsequent translators and commentators. 18

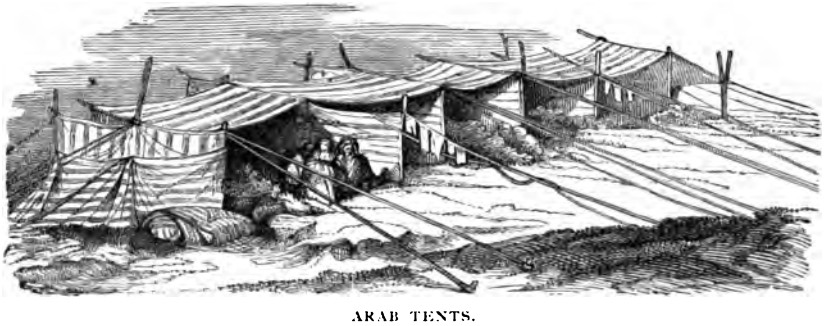


BANKS OF THE KISHON.

(15) See **5**, 25. There is no ground for the opinion, often advanced, that the sour milk had a stupefying or intoxicating quality; *cf.* v. 21[b] and the notes on Isaiah **7**, 21. 19

(16) Pitching the tent is among the nomadic Arabs to this day woman's business; Jael was therefore handling accustomed implements, the wooden pin to which the tent ropes are secured and the mallet with which they are driven. 21

The description of Sisera's death in **5**, 26 f. is different; see note there.



ARAB TENTS.

Notes on Chapter 5.

C. **5**, commonly called the *Song of Deborah*, is a Triumphal Ode celebrating the victory of the Israelites under Deborah and Barak over the Canaanite kings and the death of the leader of the enemy, in his flight, by the hand of Jael. This poem is one of the oldest monuments of Hebrew literature, and is attributed by almost all critics to a contemporary of the great events which are so vividly, and with so much feeling, portrayed in it. It has been, indeed, the almost universal opinion that the heroine, Deborah, is herself its author; but the invocation in v. 12, *Awake, awake, Deborah!* and v. 15, in which she

is spoken of in the third person, seem conclusive against this view, while in v. 7, which is its principal support, the form of the Hebrew verb may be either the first person, *Till I, Deborah, arose*, or the second, *Till thou didst arise, Deborah*; the oldest Versions have the third person, *Till Deborah arose*.

After a brief exordium the poet depicts the state of things which preceded and provoked the war (vv. 2-11); in the second part (vv. 12-22) he tells of the rising of the tribes, inscribing on a monument "more lasting than bronze" the names of those who threw themselves with ardor into the great cause, heaping contumely upon those who in base inertness stood aloof from the struggle; in the third (vv. 23-31) he describes the battle, and the flight and death of Sisera, and lingers upon the suspense of the chieftain's mother as, between foreboding and forced hope, she waits for the return of her warrior son.

As might be expected from its great antiquity, the Ode is in many places obscure; in vv. 8-15, in particular, the text has suffered so much from the injuries of time that even the general tenor of the passage can hardly be made out. The *Song of Deborah* is much older than any of the prose stories of the Judges. We may surmise that it was preserved in one of those collections of old Hebrew poetry, like the *Book of Jashar* and the *Book of the Wars of JHVH*, from which the historians quote; and we may be reasonably sure that it was included in one of the sources from which the Prophetical Book of Judges (JE) was compiled; if c. **4** is rightly attributed to E, we should be inclined to give c. **5** to J, though this is by no means a necessary consequence.

(1) The day of victory; *cf.* Exod. **15**, 1. The title, ascribing the poem to Deborah, is of course not part of the poem itself. The grammatical construction of the clause gives ground for the suspicion that the name of Barak was introduced by a later editor. **5,1**

(2) The first hemistich has been rendered in a great variety of ways; that given in the text best agrees with the parallel clause and the construction of the sentence. The poem seems properly to begin with v. 3, *Hear, ye kings*, &c.; v. 2 is not, however, as has sometimes been suspected, a misplaced fragment, but a preliminary word addressed to the actual hearers, the Israelites assembled to celebrate the triumph, bidding them unite in spirit in the praises of JHVH to which the following song gives voice. **2**

(3) VV. 4 f. describe JHVH leaving His sacred mountain in the distant South to fight with His people against their foes; *cf.* Deut. **33**, 2; Hab. **3**, 3 ff.; Ps. **68**, 7 ff.; also 2 Sam. **22**, 8 ff.; Mic. **1**, 3 f.; and above, Jud. **4**, 14.—*Seir* is the land of Edom, given by JHVH to Esau, as He gave Palestine to Jacob (Josh. **24**, 4; Deut. **2**, 5; *cf.* Gen. **32**, 3; **33**, 14). It is the mountainous region east of the great depression (the *'Arabah*) which extends from the Dead Sea to the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. The southern prolongation of this range, east of the Red Sea, are the mountains of Midian, among which was Horeb, the Mount of God; see Exod. **3**, 1; 1 Kings **19**, 8.—The words, *that is, Sinai* (v. 5), are an ancient gloss, inserted by a scribe who understood the verses of the descent of JHVH on Sinai at the giving of the Law (Exod. **19**). **4.5**

(4) VV. 6-7 depict the state of things before the war; the insecurity of the roads, the abandonment of the «unwalled villages». Neither Shamgar nor Jael had done aught to put an end to these ills until Deborah arose. This seems to be the only explanation of the mention of Shamgar and Jael. The strange juxtaposition of these names has led to the surmise that the latter was not the heroine of vv. 24 ff., but an otherwise unknown Judge; or that her name has displaced that of another Judge; but neither of these hypotheses has any external support.—The first line of v. 7 seems to be imperfect. The next two lines are thought by some critics, on formal as well as material grounds, to be a later addition to the poem. **6**

(5) V. 8 continues the description of the situation at the beginning of the war; the Israelites were almost without arms. The first half of the verse is unintelligible, and from this point to the middle of v. 15 we can make out single words and clauses, but not the connection. It is clear only that vv. 12-15a sound the praises of the tribes which threw themselves, heart and soul, into the struggle; but it is more doubtful whether vv. 9-11 also refer to the past, lauding the part which the nobles took in the national uprising, or are, like v. 2 (to which v. 9 has a noticeable resemblance), a summons to those who hear the Song to bless God for the great deliverance He has wrought. In the latter case vv. 10-11a may point the contrast between the state of things described in vv. 6-7 and the security which now exists. 5,8

(7) If the preceding verses be taken in the second of the ways suggested in the last note, *i. e.* as a summons to bless God, this line is out of place; it has been conjectured that it originally stood at the beginning of v. 13a. 11

(8) This apostrophe begins the second part of the ode; the gathering of the clans and the battle with the Canaanite kings. The last words may also be read *capture thy captors*; and have been thought to indicate that, like Gideon (**8**, 18 ff.), Barak had personal wrongs to avenge. The text continues to be very imperfect; in the following we can read little more than the names of the tribes. 12

(9) Lit. *the writer's staff.* The *writer* (Heb. *sophér*) is properly the title of an officer who was charged with the mustering of the forces; here, apparently, another synonym for *leader.* 14

(10) The tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir (here *West* Manasseh), Zebulun, Issachar, and ‹Naphtali›, under their own chiefs and captains, flock to the rendezvous, eager for the conflict. In contrast with their ardor, the indifference of other tribes, which stood aloof and took no part in the great struggle, provokes the poet to bitter taunts. 15

(11) Reuben, the oldest branch of the Leah stock, sought to establish itself in Northern Moab, east of the Dead Sea (Num. **32**, 37 f.). As the verse before us shows, it was a pastoral tribe, which probably, like Simeon on the other side of the Dead Sea, never settled down to husbandry; and, like Simeon, early disappears from history altogether. 16

(12) *Gilead*, the region east of the Jordan, north and south of the Jabbok (see note on **11**, 13), with shifting limits in both directions. It was occupied by the tribe of Gad, which is meant here.—*Dan*, after an unsuccessful effort to establish itself in the southwest (see note on **1**, 34), migrated to the north, and settled at the headwaters of the Jordan (c. **18**). The conjunction of the name with that of Asher shows that the northern seats of the tribe are in the author's mind. Dan was not on the sea-coast, but it was neighbor to the Phœnicians, and perhaps under the protection of that seafaring people, as the inhabitants of Laish had been before them; or the meaning may be that the Danites actually went to sea as rowers on Phœnician ships (E. Meyer).—The territory of *Asher* was nearer the coast; though we have no reason to think that it actually occupied a portion of it. 17

(13) Literally: *Zebulun was a people that contemned its life unto death,* ‖ *And Naphtali, on the heights of the field*; but *contemned its life unto death* and *on the heights of the field* refer to both Zebulun and Naphtali. Unlike the tribes just named, who pursued their separate interests without regard to the common good, Zebulun and Naphtali were conspicuous for an impetuous valor that recked not of life. 18

(14) With this verse begins the description of the battle itself. The *Kings of Canaan* are probably the kings of the cities in or near the Great Plain. On Taanach and Megiddo see note on **1**, 27. With the last clause *cf.* v. 30; Exod. **15**, 9. 19

(15) JHVH, whose departure for the war is described in vv. 4 f., intervenes 5,20.21
to discomfit the enemy and give His people victory; the hosts of heaven fight against the hosts of Sisera; the river Kishon (*cf.* note on 4,7) sweeps them away in ruin. The battle may have been fought in the spring; a violent storm may have thrown the Canaanites into confusion, and a sudden spate in the stream have completed their destruction.

(16) Description of the precipitate flight of the enemy; *cf.* the description 22
of the charge in Nah. 3,2 f.

(17) From the contrast between the curse of Meroz and the blessing of Jael 23
it is probable that Meroz was an Israelite village which Sisera passed in his flight, whose people, instead of cutting him off, allowed him to escape. The name *Meroz* does not occur elsewhere, and the site is unknown.

The *Messenger of JHVH* is not a prophet or an angel (in the sense of later Jewish and Christian angelology), but the manifest presence of JHVH Himself. *Cf.* the notes on 2,1 and 6,11.

(18) Synonyms are accumulated to describe the terrible blow she dealt, 26
crushing Sisera's head and utterly destroying it. In the second line the name of the implement, parallel to *the pin* in the first hemistich, is obscure. From the following verbs it appears that it was a heavy blunt weapon; and we most naturally think of a mallet, as in 4,21.

(19) The words plainly describe the collapse of a man who, standing, is 27
felled by a crushing blow; not the death agony of one who is killed in his sleep by a tent-pin driven through his temples (4,21). The poem here differs from the prose story; the description of Sisera's death in the latter is believed by many scholars to have originated in a misunderstanding of this verse.

(20) With great art, the poet shifts the scene from Jael's tent, where the 28
King, mangled and bleeding, lies dead at the feet of his slayer—a woman!—to the palace, where the queen-mother anxiously watches for him who shall return no more. Her vague presentiment of evil, the efforts of her court to banish it by the assurance of victory and rich booty, are admirably depicted; a most effective close to the Triumphal Ode.

(21) Splendid and irresistible.—The prose note, v. 31b, forms D's conclusion 31
to the story of Deborah and Barak, cc. 4.5.

Notes on Chapters 6-8.

In the story of the deliverance of Israel from the Midianites, it is evident at first glance that 8,4 ff. is not the sequel of 7,23-8,3. In the latter verses the hordes of the enemy have been routed, pursued, intercepted; the two chiefs have been captured and slain; the victors have quarreled and composed their quarrel. In 8,4, however, Gideon with his three hundred men crosses the Jordan in hot pursuit of the two Kings of Midian; he overtakes them on the edge of the desert, surprises the camp, and takes prisoner the Kings. There can be no doubt, therefore, that 8,4-21 comes from a different source from the main narrative in 6,1-8,3. The latter chapters themselves are not homogeneous: 6,25 ff. is not the continuation of 6,11-24; 6,36-40 can hardly be from the same hand with 6,21 ff.; compare also 6,34 with 6,35; 7,2-8; and 6,35 with 7,23 f.; 8,1. The literary analysis of the chapters is peculiarly difficult, and its results are more than usually uncertain.

The opening verses, 6,1-6, are the usual Deuteronomistic introduction; *cf.* 3,7 ff. The description of the annual forays of the Midianites is doubtless derived from older sources—perhaps, indeed, both narratives of Gideon's exploits are represented in it—but it has been so amplified and heightened by editorial hands that it is not possible to recover the original form of the

introduction. VV. 7-10, the speech of the prophet, recalling the great things JHVH has done for His people, and reproving them for their disobedience, is plainly neither part of D's introduction nor of the story which follows (vv. 11-24). It is ascribed in the text to E, or rather to the secondary stratum of E (E^2); it may, perhaps, equally well be attributed to a post-Deuteronomistic editor (D^2). VV. 11-24 are substantially from J (*cf.* Gen. **18**, 1 ff.; Jud. **13**, 2 ff.), but have received some additions from a later hand, which may be recognized by the fact that they anticipate Gideon's recognition of the *Messenger* (v. 22), and consequently convert Gideon's proffer of hospitality into a proposal to offer sacrifice. VV. 25-32 are plainly not by the author of vv. 11-24. Most critics regard them as a mere accretion to the original story, showing how the deliverer first purged himself of the national sin, and how he came by the name Jerubbaal. But as the verses have not the characteristic stamp of the Deuteronomistic school, and seem to be connected with a second strand in the subsequent narrative, they are here ascribed to a different source (E). V. 33 does not belong to the same source as vv. 11-24, in which the Midianites are already in the land (v. 11); v. 34, in which Gideon calls out his clan, may be the continuation of v. 24; v. 35 is apparently an exaggerating addition to v. 34, and contains the premises of **7**, 2-8. VV. 36-40, the sign of the fleece is plainly from E.

7, 1, describing the position of the two camps, probably belongs to the main narrative (J); *cf.* also v. 8^b; vv. 2-8^a, the reduction of Gideon's 32,000 men to 300, is secondary; perhaps by R^{JE}, perhaps E^2. VV. 9-15 belong to the principal narrative (J), in which they immediately followed v. 1. The redundancy and confusion in the account of Gideon's stratagem, vv. 16-22, are generally attributed to editorial officiousness, some critics regarding the jars and torches, others the horns, as interpolated. If two strands of narrative are recognized in the chapters, however, it is more natural to suppose that the confusion here is due to the attempts to unite two versions of the story. The analysis is very uncertain; the story in which the horns play the chief part (E) is the more completely preserved; the other seems to have run substantially as follows: They took empty jars with torches concealed in them, and surrounded the camp; following Gideon's example, they smashed the jars, holding on to the torches, and shouted *For JHVH and Gideon*, &c. The description of the pursuit in vv. 23-25 seems to come from the second narrative (E); **8**, 4 follows naturally after J's part of **7**, 22. The verses **8**, 1-3 are the continuation of E's narrative.

The section **8**, 4-21 is another account of the pursuit of Midian and the death of the chiefs. Most critics think that it is derived from an independent source and that the beginning of the narrative has been omitted (*cf.* especially v. 18). In the text an attempt has been made to connect it with the older version of the story in **6**. **7** (J), in which it followed **7**, 22. (See note on that verse.)

The offer and refusal of the kingdom (v. 22 f.) have no possible connection with vv. 4-21, and can hardly be by the author of vv. 1-3. The theocratic estimate of the kingdom resembles 1 Sam. **8**, 7; **10**, 19; **12**, 12, and like those passages may be attributed to a secondary Ephraimitic hand (E^2); the verses were probably meant to stand after **8**, 3. VV. 24-27 are probably derived substantially from J, but have suffered some editorial alterations. The request was originally made of Gideon's followers, his own clan of Abi-ezer. In v. 26 the additions to the primitive text are obvious. The latter part of v. 27 is a Deuteronomic censure; v. 28 is D's closing formula. V. 29 perhaps originally stood after **8**, 3; vv. 33-35 are also from D, and were probably meant as a substitute for c. **9**; vv. 30-32, on the contrary, seem to be an introduction

to 9, prefixed by the later editor who restored the history of Abimelech to its place in the Book.

(1) *Midian*, a tribe of Northwestern Arabia which the Israelite historians regarded as an inferior branch of their own race (descendants of Abraham by the concubine Keturah). The Land of Midian, in which the sacred mountain of JHVH, Horeb (Exod. 3, 1), was situated, lay east of the Gulf of 'Aqabah and the Red Sea; but, like modern Arab tribes, the Midianites, in search of pasture or plunder, often wandered far to the north (see *e. g.* Gen. 36, 35). 6, 1

(2) The translation *hiding-places* gives only the general sense which the context requires; the exact meaning of the word is unknown. See further, 1 Sam. 13, 6 (J). 2

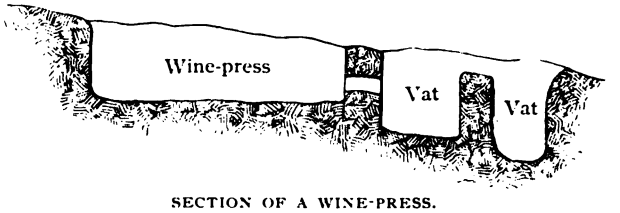
(3) The *Amalekites* were Bedouins, of the deserts south of Palestine; see 1 Sam. 15; 30; Num. 14, 43. 45; also Exod. 17, 8 ff.; Deut. 25, 17-19; Num. 24, 20. The *eastern Bedouins* (in Heb. *the Sons of the East*) are the tribes of the Syrian Desert, east of Moab and Ammon (Jer. 49, 28; Ezek. 25, 4. 10; Is. 11, 14). These names, like those of Ammon and Amalek in 3, 13, were very likely introduced by an editor. 3

(4) *Gaza*, the most southern city on the coast, on the road to Egypt (*cf.* notes on 16, 1). This exaggeration also is probably to be attributed to an editor. 4

(5) With this reproof compare 2, 1ª-5ᵇ; 10, 11-16; 1 Sam. 7, 3 f.; 10, 17-19; 12, 6-25; also 2 Kings 17, 35 ff. It comes to a very abrupt termination; we should expect it to close, as in other cases, with a denunciation of judgment. 7-10

(6) *Cf.* Josh. 24, 12 f.. 18; and especially 1 Sam. 10, 18. 9

(7) In all the old accounts of the appearances of the *Messenger of JHVH*, the *Messenger* is identified with the deity; see Gen. 16, 7-14; 21, 17-19; 22, 11-14. 15-18; 31, 11-13; Exod. 3, 2 ff.; Jud. 13, 2 ff.; *cf.* also Gen. 32, 24-30 with Hos. 12, 4 f.; and Gen. 18. 19.—*Ophrah* seems to have been not very far from Shechem (see 9, 1-5); the site is not certainly identified.—*Abi-ezer* was a clan of Manasseh (Josh. 17, 2). Joash was the proprietor of the Holy Tree, just as, in the parallel account of the calling of Gideon, he was of the sanctuary of Baal (v. 25). 11



SECTION OF A WINE-PRESS.

(8) The wine-press was a square or oblong excavation in the surface rock, in which a man could beat out a few sheaves of wheat unobserved. In the illustration the larger excavation on the left is the press, in which the grapes were trampled with the feet; the juice ran through channels into the two deeper vats on the right. The threshing-floor, always on a hill-top, was, on the contrary, a peculiarly exposed place.

(9) *Cf.* 11, 1; 1 Kings 11, 28; 2 Kings 5, 1; &c. 12

(10) These words seem to be the addition of an editor; hardly of D, in whom the word translated *miracles* does not occur. 13

(11) With vv. 14-16 *cf.* Exod. 3, 10-12. 14

(12) If the words be an original part of the narrative, we must suppose that the author wrote: *Does not JHVH send thee?* (4, 6).

(13) Such protestations, as 1 Sam. 9, 21 shows us, are not to be taken literally. 15

(14) Here also the author must have written: He replied, *Surely, JHVH* **6**, 16
will be with thee.

(15) Gideon asks the stranger to wait till he can prepare him a meal; *cf.* 17
Gen. **18**, 3-8; Jud. **13**, 15-19. The request for a sign, which presumes that
Gideon already recognized his visitor, anticipates vv. 21 f., and is an addition
by the same author who altered the text in the following verse in the belief
that Gideon from the first intended a sacrifice.

(16) The quantity of cakes is excessive, especially under the circumstances; 19
cf. Gen. **18**, 6; 1 Sam. **17**, 17.

(17) V. 20, together with the end of v. 19[a] (*the meat he put in a basket, and* 20
the broth in a pot), is perhaps secondary.

(18) *Cf.* Lev. **9**, 24; 1 Kings **18**, 38; 2 Chron. **7**, 1; 2 Macc. **2**, 10-13. The 21
last clause, which conflicts with what follows, has been brought over from **13**, 20.

(19) To see God (or His *Messenger*, which is the same thing) is death; see 22
13, 22; Gen. **16**, 13; **32**, 30; Exod. **20**, 19 (16); **33**, 20; Is. **6**, 5.

(20) Explanation of the origin of the name of the altar JHVH-shalom at 23.24
Ophrah.

(21) The text is corrupt; the simplest emendation is that adopted in the 25
translation; but it is far from certain.

(22) The altar, of which Joash was the proprietary custodian, was the village
sanctuary (vv. 28 ff.), sacred to the Baal of the place (see on **2**, 13); the sacred
pole (*asherâh*) beside the altar was doubtless dedicated to the same deity.
Such poles or posts seem to have stood at every Canaanite place of worship
(Exod. **34**, 13; Deut. **12**, 3); and were erected by the Israelites beside the altars
of JHVH (1 Kings **14**, 23; 2 Kings **17**, 10); even in the Temple in Jerusalem (2
Kings **21**, 7; **23**, 6). See also note on **3**, 7.

(23) These words were perhaps a gloss intended for a different place or in 31
a different sense.

(24) *Cf.* Job **13**, 8; 1 Kings **18**, 21-39. *Deorum iniuriæ dis curæ.*

(25) The explanation of the name Jerubbaal, *Let-Baal-contend-with-him*, is a 32
fanciful etymology. The name is now commonly interpreted, *Baal contends* (*cf.*
Jehoiarib, 1 Chron. **24**, 7); better, *Baal founds, establishes*, like Jeruel. The
story seems to be spun out of the etymology, but need not, on that account,
be very late; *cf.* **15**, 14-19.

(26) The annual invasion, such as is described in vv. 2-6. The Plain, or 33
Valley (Hos. **1**, 5; Josh. **17**, 16), of Jezreel, the eastern end of the great depres-



PLAIN OF JEZREEL.

sion which divides the mountains of Central Palestine from Galilee, takes its name from the city of Jezreel, the modern *Zer'in*. The cut shows a part of the Plain, as seen from Jenîn.

(27) *Possessed Gideon*, lit. *put him on*, as a garment; *cf.* 1 Chron. **12**, 18; 2 Chron. **24**, 20; and see the note on **3**, 10. **6,34**

(28) In **7**, 23 these tribes are first called out to pursue the fleeing foe; but **7**, 2-8 suppose that Gideon had assembled at least his own tribe, Manasseh, and perhaps v. 35ª may come originally from E. If so, it would naturally stand after vv. 36-40. 35

(29) This second miraculous sign is superfluous after vv. 21-24; it is very natural, however, if, in a parallel account of the call of Gideon, the summons to deliver Israel came to him, as often in E, in a dream or night vision. Notice *God* (*Elohim*) throughout, instead of JHVH. 36-40*

(30) The words are probably a reminiscence of Gen. **18**, 32. 39

(31) These places are generally thought to have been in or near the Plain of Jezreel. *En-harod* has been identified with *'Ain Jâlûd*, a copious spring at the foot of Mount Gilboa; *Gibeah ha-moreh* is then supposed to be the hill on the northern side of the valley, now called *Jebel Daht* (often put down on the maps as *Little Hermon*). The positions would then be much the same which were occupied by Saul and the Philistines before the disastrous battle of Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. **28**, 4; *cf.* **29**, 1); but all this rests on very slender foundations. The name *ha-moreh* elsewhere occurs only in the neighborhood of Shechem (Gen. **12**, 6; Deut. **11**, 30). **7**, 1

(32) The host which Gideon has collected (**6**, 35) is reduced to a handful, to teach the lesson that it is as easy for JHVH to deliver by few as by many (1 Sam. **14**, 6), and to compel men to give the glory to Him alone (v. 2; Is. **10**, 13-15; Deut. **8**, 11-18; **9**, 4 f.; *cf.* 1 Cor. **1**, 25-27). 2-8

(33) The text, *let him return and . . . from Mount Gilead*, is unintelligible; no satisfactory emendation has been proposed. 3

(34) The significance of this test is not quite clear; perhaps those who lapped *like dogs* were thus discovered to be rude, fierce men (*cf.* the name Caleb). 6

(35) The verse explains how Gideon's three hundred men came to have as many horns and jars (v. 16). 8

(36) *Cf.* **6**, 3-5; **8**, 10. The verse, as it stands, is the work of an editor; probably, however, a description of the great numbers of Midian stood here in J also. The attempt in the text to distinguish this element is merely a possibility. 12

(37) Probably a particular kind of flat, round, hard-baked ash-cake. The barley bread represents, not without a touch of Bedouin contempt, the Israelite peasantry; the tent is the natural symbol of the nomad. 13

(38) An erroneous definiteness has been given to the first part of the interpretation of the dream by a gloss from v. 20; the second clause has been also made unnecessarily explicit by the introduction of the name Midian. 14

(39) The night was divided into three watches; not, as among the Romans, into four (Matth. **14**, 25; Mark **6**, 48; **13**, 35; Luke **12**, 38). 19

(40) The direction of the flight is none the clearer for this multiplication of names, which is due in part to the fusion of two sources, in part probably to later glosses. The places are all unknown; but the following narrative shows that we are to look for them in the valley of the Jordan, between Beth-shean and the middle fords leading to Succoth. *Sererah* (Heb.) is probably miswritten for *Seredah* (1 Kings **11**, 26), which is generally believed to be the same as Sarthan (1 Kings **4**, 12; **7**, 46; *cf.* 2 Chron. **4**, 17) opposite Succoth. *Abel-meholah*, named with Sarthan in 1 Kings **4**, 12, may also come from J. 22

(41) This verse conflicts with **6**, 35, according to which these tribes were all called out before the attack on the camp of Midian (see note on **6**, 35). Naphtali and Asher may be the exaggeration of an editor; those tribes were much too remote to be of any use in such a pursuit. 23

(42) The Ephraimites, descending into the valley of the Jordan by some of the great wadies, intercepted the Midianites in their flight southward; perhaps at the stream which empties into the Jordan from Wady Fâr'ah. In the spring this stream is impassable, as are also the adjacent fords of the Jordan. In the angle between the two the enemy would be in a trap. 7,24

(43) *Cf.* Is. **10**,26. The slaughter of Midian is also referred to in Is. **9**,4; Ps. **83**,9–12. 25

(44) This verse is intended to harmonize the preceding account with **8**,4 ff.: a large part of the Midianites escaped across the Jordan; the Ephraimites pursuing them came up with Gideon, who had crossed at another ford. The author of **7**,24 f., on the contrary, represents Gideon as following the Midianites down the valley, driving them into the arms of the Ephraimites.

(45) *Cf.* **12**,1–6. The great tribe was jealous of its leadership, and angry that it should seem to be ignored. Gideon appeased them by a conciliatory answer; why should they be angry, when the glory of the victory had fallen to them, after all? 8,1

(46) *Succoth* was on the eastern side of the Jordan, not far from the fords at which the main road from Shechem to Gilead crossed the river, and probably south of the Jabbok (see note on **11**,13). 5

(47) Zebah and Zalmunna, the two Kings of Midian, take the place of Oreb and Zeeb, the two chiefs of Midian in **7**,25 (*cf.* Ps. **83**,11). The traditional pronunciation of the names represents a popular etymology.

(48) *Penuel* was in the upland, apparently on the Jabbok at the point where the road from the north crossed that stream; see Gen. **33**,17; 1 Kings **12**,25. 8

(49) The stronghold of the town, which was itself probably unwalled; *cf.* v. 17; **9**,47.51 f. 9

(50) The situation of Karkor is not known. The latter part of the verse, with its enormous numbers, is the exaggeration of a late editor; *cf.* Num. **31**. 10

(51) Jogbehah (Num. **32**,35) is probably *Khirbet el-Jubeihât*, about midway between *es-Salt* and *'Ammân*. If this identification be correct, the direction of the flight and pursuit was southeast, toward the desert. The site of *Nobah* is unknown; it is not *el-Qanawât*, in the Hauran, with which, on the strength of Num. **32**,42, it has been sometimes connected. 11

(52) It has been suggested that the description which might be here expected of the surprise of the camp, has been combined with that of the attack on the Midianites west of the Jordan in **7**,16 ff. 12

(53) The text, apparently describing the way by which Gideon returned, is unintelligible. 13

(54) He *carded* them, dragging them over a bed of thorns and knapweed (*cf.* *Yômâ* 69ª); a form of torture to which there are many references in Greek authors; *e. g.* Herodot. 1,92. 16

(55) He does not need to be told; the question was a menace, and was so understood. The kings answer in the same spirit, boasting of their deed with savage bravado. 18

(56) His brother's blood cries for vengeance. Of this personal wrong nothing is related in the preceding chapters; and it has been inferred that the antecedents of **8**,4–21 were entirely different from what we read in **6**.**7**; but the history of the tradition has been too complex to justify much confidence on this point. 19

(57) Strings of jingling crescents, which were both ornaments and amulets. Riding camels are still often decorated in a similar way. 21

(58) With this offer and rejection of the kingdom on theocratic grounds *cf.* 1 Sam. **8**,7; **10**,19; **12**,12.17.19; Hos. **13**,10 f.; (**9**,9; **10**,9ᵇ). 23

(59) In the present connection, this appears to be a surrogate for the offer 24

of the kingdom which he had declined; but it is very unlikely that the same author who in v. 22 f. makes Gideon so scrupulous, proceeded in the next breath to tell how he collected gold to make an idol. VV. 24-27 are attributed by most critics to the older source (J); in that case the request must have been addressed to Gideon's own clansmen of Abi-ezer. 8

(60) These caravan traders, whose connections extended to the gold lands of Arabia, were richer in such things than the peasants; and, like other nomads, they carried all their wealth about them. 24

(61) About seventy pounds weight. 26

(62) The second half-verse, with its irrelevant enumeration of the other spoils which fell to Gideon, is plainly a later addition.

(63) The *Ephod* here, as in c. **17**, was an idol of some kind, as the author of the latter part of the verse understood it. See note on **17**, 5. 27

(64) The cause of their ruin; *cf.* **2**, 3.

(65) On this and the following verses (30-32. 33-35) see above, p. 67, ll. 53 ff. 29

(66) As in all similar names, *mélek* (king) is the name or title of a god. 31

(67) *Cf.* **2**, 19; **3**, 11. 12; **4**, 1. On Baal-berith see note on **9**, 4. 33

(68) *Cf.* 1 Sam. **10**, 18 f.; **12**, 11. 34

Notes on Chapter 9.

The history of Abimelech differs from all the others in **2**, 5-**16**, 31 in having no introduction or conclusion such as D has provided for the rest. The story did not lend itself to his moralizing, and was therefore omitted from the Deuteronomistic Book of Judges. It is, however, the original sequel of the story of Gideon; is derived from the same sources; and had a place in the pre-Deuteronomic Judges. A post-Exilic editor restored it to its place, providing it with a few words of introduction (**8**, 31 f.) derived in substance from the history itself. The chapter is not a unit, as appears most plainly in the two accounts of the attack upon Shechem, vv. 30-41 and vv. 42-45. The greater part of the chapter is derived from E; but the story of Gaal and the unsuccessful revolt of the Shechemites (vv. 26-41) is from a different source; presumably J.

The chapter is of great interest for the glimpse which it gives us of the relations of the Israelites to the older population of the land, among or beside whom they settled (c. 1). It has often been regarded as a kind of prelude to the history of the kingdom of Saul; but it is doubtful whether so much significance should be ascribed to it. Abimelech was king of the Canaanite city of Shechem; how far his authority was recognized by purely Israelite communities does not appear.

(1) Abimelech's mother was a Canaanite woman of Shechem, who, like Samson's Timnathite wife (**14**. **15**, 1-8), was not married into the man's family, but remained in her own. The offspring of such a union naturally belonged to the mother's clan. Abimelech makes use of this relation to gain over the people of Shechem.—*Shechem*, the modern *Nâbulus* (Neapolis) lies in the heart of the Highlands of Ephraim, in a valley between Mount Ebal on the north and Mount Gerizim on the south (see full page illustration facing p. 20). Its position at the intersection of the great roads, east and west and north and south, made it at all times a place of commanding importance.—*The citizens of Shechem*, lit. *the proprietors* (Heb. *ba'alîm*). That they were Canaanites appears plainly from vv. 26 ff.; but it is not so clear that the author of vv. 1-25. 42 ff. so represented them; Josh. **24**, 1-25 (E) supposes that Shechem was in the hands of the Israelites before the death of Joshua. 9, 1-3

(2) *Baal-berith* was the god of Shechem. El-berith (v. 46) is doubtless the same deity; the names are entirely equivalent in meaning; *el* is the divinity who inhabits the place, *ba'al*, the divinity to whom it belongs. The origin and significance of the name Baal-(El-)berith is unknown; the most natural interpretation of the words is, *One who is a party to a covenant.* — *Seventy shekels of silver*, intrinsically worth thirty-five or forty dollars (seven or eight pounds sterling) of our money, but having, of course, in ancient times a vastly greater purchasing power. 9,4

(3) Like cattle slaughtered in the open field (1 Sam. 14,33 f.; *cf.* Deut. 12,16.23 f.). The motive is probably to be sought in animistic superstitions; he disposed of the blood of his victims, in which was their life (*cf.* Lev. 17,10 f.), so that they should give him no further trouble. 5

(4) *Beth-millo* (*cf.* v 20) must have been a town in the vicinity of Shechem. It is often, but without sufficient ground, thought to be the same as the Tower of Shechem (vv. 46-49).— The *Monument Tree*, a holy tree beside which was a standing stone (*maççebâh*); see Josh. 24,26 f., and Gen. 35,4.— *Mount Gerizim* was famous in later times as the Holy Mountain of the Samaritans, whose temple (from the 4th or 5th cent. B. C.) stood upon its summit, on the spot where the ruins are seen in the picture facing p. 18. See John 4,20 f.; Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 7,2; 8,2 f., and *cf.* Neh. 13,28 f. 6

(5) Jotham's fable of the trees who chose a king, with its pointed application to the citizens of Shechem and their new lord, is the most striking example of this kind of apologue in the OT. It is believed by many scholars that the fable itself (vv. 8-15) is a piece of ancient Hebrew folk-lore, which the author of vv. 7-21 borrowed and applied. In confirmation of this view it is urged that the application does not altogether correspond to the fable: in v. 15 the question is, whether the trees are acting in good faith in making the thorn king; in v. 16 it is, whether the Shechemites have acted in good faith toward the House of Jerubbaal in making Abimelech king. Such looseness in the logic of the moral is not uncommon; more than one of the parables in the NT might be adduced in which the connection of text and application is no closer than in Jotham's fable. We are hardly warranted, therefore, in attributing vv. 8-15 to a different author from the following verses. Nor is there sufficient reason for regarding, with other critics, vv. 7-21 altogether as a secondary addition to the story. 7 ff.

(6) The natural teaching of the fable is that the good and faithful members of the community have too much to do in their own calling to lay it aside for the sake of ruling their fellows; it is only the worthless and pestilent sort who are willing to be vested with such authority. 15

(7) VV. 16b-19a are regarded by some critics as a long gloss on v. 16a: this rehearsal of Jerubbaal's services and the Shechemites' ingratitude interrupts the speech (observe the resumption of the thread in v. 19a). The verses are certainly not indispensable; but they are appropriate enough, and have a vigor and individuality of expression not usually found in glosses. 19

(8) *Cf.* v. 15b; vv. 42-49.50-54.56 f. 20

(9) The site of Beer is not certainly known; perhaps *el-Bireh* (Beeroth), north of Jerusalem. 21

(10) There is no hint in what precedes that Abimelech ruled over Israel at all; either the verse is altogether from the hand of an editor, or the name Israel has been substituted for an original Shechem. 22

(11) Literally, *an evil spirit*; *cf.* 1 Sam. 16,14; 18,10 (*an evil divine spirit*); 19,9; 1 Kings 22,19-23 (in Ahab's prophets). 23

(12) The verse is not improbably by RJE, emphasizing again the moral of the history. 24

(13) The sequel of v. 25 is not vv. 26-41, but vv. 42 ff.; the episode of Gaal is from a different source. 9,25

(14) The story of Gaal begins abruptly; in the original source from which it was taken, it is probable that the readers had already been informed who this agitator was, and perhaps what his previous relations to Abimelech had been. His name was perhaps *Go'al* (Josephus, *Gyales*), rather than *Ga'al*. 26

(15) The vintage was doubtless, as among other peoples, a season of religious festivities in honor of the god of the vine. Gaal took advantage of this, and when the heads of the vintagers were hot with wine and with the excitement of the feast, instigated a revolt against Abimelech. 27

(16) That is, *What is this Abimelech to us, the citizens of Shechem, that we should serve him!* This verse is difficult, and has been variously interpreted. It seems clear, however, that Gaal is inciting the native Shechemites to revolt against this Israelite half-breed who presumes to lord it over the ancient Hamorite aristocracy of Shechem, to whom he himself had once been subject. 28

(17) Abimelech's representative in the city. 30

(18) *Arumah* seems to have been Abimelech's residence; see v. 41. The Hebrew text is generally translated *secretly* (it would be better, *treacherously*); but this appears impossible in the context. 31

(19) The localities thus designated are not known; the first, to judge from the name, would seem to have been a rounded knob; the second was, or had been, the seat of a certain class of soothsayers (*me'onenîm*); *cf.* the Moreh Tree, Gen. **12**, 6; and, perhaps, Jud. **7**, 1. 37

(20) Abimelech did not force his way into the town, but, having sufficiently chastised the rebels, returned to Arumah. The Shechemites had experienced enough of Gaal, and were willing to have him made a scape-goat. Zebul accordingly expelled him and his kin, and peace was restored.—The site of Arumah is not identified; *El-'Ormeh*, two hours SE of Shechem, has been suggested, but without any reason except the fancied resemblance of the names. 41

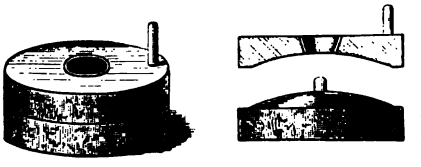
(21) VV. 42-45 are not the continuation of vv. 34-41, but of the parallel narrative in vv. 22-25. When the news was brought to Abimelech that the Shechemites were infesting the highways, he resolved to punish them; and the next time they set out on a marauding expedition he laid an ambush for them. The stratagem is very similar to that described in vv. 34-41; *cf.* also Josh. **8**. 42

(22) Probably a symbol of perpetual desolation. In Hebrew, as well as in Assyrian, Arabic, and Syriac, *salt ground*, properly *ground covered with a saline crust*, is a barren waste in which not even the scanty vegetation of the desert can grow. *Cf.* Deut. **29**, 23; Job **39**, 6; Ps. **107**, 34; Jer. **17**, 6. Parallels to the strewing of a devastated country with salt are found in the cuneiform inscriptions. If Shechem was actually destroyed during the period of the Judges, it was soon rebuilt (see 1 Kings **12**, 1. 25). 45

(23) The Tower of Shechem was not a stronghold within the city, like that at Thebez (v. 51), but stood outside of the walls, and apparently at some little distance. The people in the Tower were Shechemites, and had joined in the revolt. The temple of El-berith is not improbably the same which in v. 4 bears the name of Baal-berith; see note on the latter verse. The word translated *crypt* is found besides only in 1 Sam. **13**, 6, where it plainly denotes a hiding place, probably subterranean; and the same meaning is perhaps admissible here, if we may suppose that the *crypt* was an excavation in the earth or rock, not under, but behind the temple. The interpretation is, however, extremely uncertain. Others translate *tower*, which will not at all apply in Samuel. 46

(24) Thebez also had joined in the revolt begun by Shechem, and, like the latter, was probably a Canaanite town (see v. 55). It is identified with the modern *Tûbâs*, a large village about four hours NE of *Nâbulus* (Shechem) on the road to *Beisân*. 50

(25) The upper stone of a hand-mill, which might weigh twenty-five or thirty pounds. 9,53



MODERN PALESTINIAN HAND-MILL.

(26) To die by a woman's hand was an ignominy; *cf.* 4,9. Compare in general the death of Saul, 1 Sam. 31,4 f. That Abimelech's followers were Israelites is of prime importance for the understanding of the whole story. The revolt of Shechem and the other towns was a Canaanite 54

rising against the power of the half-Israelite Abimelech.

(27) The moral of the history; *cf.* vv. 16-20. 24. 57

Notes on 10,1-5.

Tola and Jair, with Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (12,8-15) constitute the group of *Minor Judges*; so-called because in comparison with Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson, little or nothing is narrated of them; see above, p. 53, ll. 49 ff.

The color (DARK PURPLE) which is given to these verses in the text here indicates only that the *Minor Judges* were probably included in the pre-Deuteronomic Book of Judges (JE).

(1) *Tola* is the name of a clan of Issachar (Gen. 46,13; Num. 26,23), apparently the leading clan of the tribe (1 Chron. 7,1 ff.); *Puah*, here Tola's father, appears in the genealogical lists as his brother, that is, another clan of the same tribe. The name *Dodo* (or *Dodai*) appears in the catalogue of David's heroes (2 Sam. 23,9.24), and has been lately found in the Amarna tablets (*Dûdu*). *Shamir* has not been identified; as the seat of a clan of Issachar, we may infer that it lay in the northeastern part of the Highlands of Ephraim, not far from the Plain of Jezreel (see on 6,33). The branches of Issachar which settled south of the plain by the side of the great tribe of Joseph seem often, like Benjamin in the south, to be included in Joseph. 10,2

Observe the form of the chronological note, differing from that which regularly concludes the histories of the Greater Judges.

(2) Jair is a clan of East Manasseh (Machir), Num. 32,39-41, whose villages (Havoth-jair) formed a district in Gilead. The conquest of this region by Manassite clans was the result of a returning wave of migration from Western Palestine (*cf.*, perhaps, Josh. 17,14-18). *Camon* is perhaps *Kumêm*, west of Irbid. The *thirty saddle-asses* have been brought from 12,14, probably through a confusion of the words for *cities* (Heb. *'arîm*) and *asses* (Heb. *'ayarîm*). 4

Notes on 10,6-18.

This passage repeats and enforces the moral of the history, as a preface to a new period of oppression; *cf.* 2,6-21; 6,7-10. It is not all of one piece; vv. 11-16 is not, as a whole, the work of D; its affinities are rather with 6, 7-10; Josh. 24; 1 Sam. 7.12 (E^2). The antecedents of vv. 11-16 are (in vv. 6-10) wrought into D's introduction to the Ammonite oppression from which Israel

was delivered by Jephthah. It is possible that the words *into the power of the Philistines* (v. 7) are a fragment of this source, in which case the passage will have been E's introduction to the Philistine oppression in the days of Eli and Samuel. On the other hand, it is possible that the name of the Philistines was inserted here by a later hand, to make the introduction serve for the story of Samson as well as for that of Jephthah. In the catalogue of foreign gods worshiped by the Israelites (v. 6) and in the long list of their oppressors (v. 11) we cannot fail to recognize the hand of later editors or scribes; in v. 11, indeed, the glosses have wrecked the sentence. The color of vv. 11-16 is meant to indicate that these verses are not originally D's; the question whether they may have been retouched by him, and to what extent, is not decided. In the rest, though a basis of E may underlie vv. 6-10, it is impossible to separate it from the overlying introduction of D.

(1) This catalogue comprises all the neighboring nations; *cf.* **2**,12; Deut. **6**,14; **13**,7 f. It is probably an editorial gloss. On the *Baals* and *Astartes*, the gods of Canaan, see note on **2**,13. **10**,6

(2) On this verse see above, l. 1. The following narrative deals only with the oppression of the Israelites in Gilead by the Ammonites; the Philistines first appear in the story of Samson, cc. **13-16**. 7

(3) *That year, eighteen years*, is obviously a doublet; the latter belongs to D's chronology; the former seems to be a fragment of E; *cf.* **11**,4, where we might translate, *after a year*. The rest of the verse is very likely by the same hand as v. 9a, an editorial gloss emphasizing the universality of the judgment, and explaining how the Ammonites oppressed the tribes west of the Jordan. It need hardly be said that the story of Jephthah knows nothing of such a state of things.—*For the land of the Amorites who were in Gilead*, *cf.* **11**,19 ff. 8

(4) Judah is mentioned besides only in **15**,9-13; **18**,12. 9

(5) *Cf.* v. 15; 1 Sam. **12**,10; Num. **14**,40; **21**,7. This formula of confession is peculiarly frequent in E. 10

(6) This enumeration of Israel's oppressors has apparently grown under the hand of successive editors, as is the wont of such lists. The deliverance from the Ammonites, and the oppression by the Philistines and deliverance from them, were still future, and could not be appealed to as conspicuous evidences of JHVH's goodness in the past; of an Amorite oppression we know nothing—the conquest of the Amorite Sihon by Israel (Num. **21**,21 ff.) can hardly be reckoned an oppression of Israel by Sihon—and we have equally little information about a Phœnician oppression. 12

For *Maonites* of the Received Text we are to read *Midianites*; otherwise we should have here another unknown oppressor, while the Midianites, whose devastations are so vividly depicted in **6**,1 ff., would be lacking. Finally, Moab (c. **3**) and the Canaanites (cc. **4.5**) are not included in this singular list (both are added by some of the Versions). Compare, for the rest, 1 Sam. **12**,10.

(7) See Jer. **2**,28; Deut. **32**,37 f.; 2 Kings **3**,13. 14

(8) *Cf.* 2 Sam. **24**,14; 2 Macc. **10**,4. 15

(9) *Cf.* Josh. **24**,20.23; 1 Sam. **7**,3; Gen. **35**,2.4; Deut. **31**,16. 16

(10) In its original connection, v. 16 must have been immediately followed by the raising up of the deliverer; vv. 17 f. are an editorial introduction to the story of Jephthah, the material for which is chiefly extracted from c. **11**, much as **8**,33-35 is drawn from c. **9**.—With the last sentence *cf.* **11**,8.9.11. 16-18

Notes on 11, 1-12, 7.

In the story of Jephthah the long argument defending Israel's title to Gilead (**11**, 12-28) is clearly foreign to the original narrative. The material for it is taken, in part word for word, from Num. **20**. **21**; and though it purports to be addressed to the King of Ammon, it really deals exclusively with Israel's relations to the *Moabites*: Chemosh (v. 24) is the national god of Moab; Balak (v. 25), whose course is contrasted with that of the present King, was King of Moab; the places named in v. 26 are Moabite cities. The introduction of this long interpolation has done some injury to the context; vv. 30 f. are the original sequel of v. 11[a]; v. 11[b] seems to belong after v. 31; v. 29 is a doublet to v. 32. The section **12**, 1-6 is also regarded by some critics as an addition in imitation of **8**, 1-3; but without sufficient grounds. From what source the story of Jephthah is derived it is not possible to say with confidence. So far as the general impression which the narrative makes may be trusted, we should be inclined to attribute it to E. It is, of course, ultimately of Gileadite origin.

(1) VV. 1[b]. 2 are a late gloss, spun out of v. 1[a] combined with v. 7. **11**, 1. 2

(2) The outlawed man took to the life of a freebooter, just as a modern Arab inevitably does under like circumstances—there is no other way in which he can live; *cf.* the case of David, 1 Sam. **22**, 1 f.; **23**, 1-5; **25**; **27**, 7 ff. Like David (1 Sam. **22**, 2), Jephthah gathered around him a band of broken men (**9**, 4), who went on forays with him.—*The land of Tob* appears to have been an Aramean district (2 Sam. **10**, 6. 8); it therefore lay north or northeast of Gilead. 3



RUINS OF 'AMMÂN.

(3) The Ammonites were of the same stock with the Moabites, and adjoined them on the northeast, where, on the borders of the desert, they lived a semi-nomadic life. Their chief town was *Rabbath-ammon* ("The Great Town of the Ammonites"), now *'Ammân*, on the upper Jabbok. The Israelite settlements 4

in Gilead were frequently invaded by them (see 1 Sam. 11, 1 ff.); David waged 11
an embittered war with them (2 Sam. 10-12). On the site of the ancient
Ammonite capital, Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-247 B. C.) built a new city,
which he called Philadelphia. The ruins of this Ptolemaic city, as shown in the engraving, are among the finest in the region east of the Jordan.



GORGE OF THE ARNON NEAR ITS MOUTH.

(4) V. 5a is superfluous beside v. 4, and may be secondary.—*The Elders of Gilead* were the heads of the families and clans; the Hebrew word corresponds in meaning and use to the Arab *sheikh*. The name Gilead is often given to the whole country occupied by Israel on the east of the Jordan, as Canaan is to that on the west of the river. The natural boundaries of this region are the *Yarmûk* on the north and *Wâdy Môjib* (Arnon) on the south. The *Zerqâ* (Jabbok; see note 11) divides it into two parts: the northern, *Jebel 'Ajlûn*, the southern, the *Belqâ*, each of which is sometimes called Gilead. The latter is the scene of our story. 5

(5) Expulsion 7
from the clan was not merely banishment; by severing the bond of kindred blood, it made a man an outlaw, whose wrongs or whose death there was none to avenge. Why Jephthah was driven out is not narrated; a later writer tries to supply the deficiency in vv. 1b. 2.

(6) Because we did banish thee, we have now come to recall thee. 8

(7) He makes them solemnly repeat their pledge. 9

(8) *Cf.* 9, 6. So Saul at Gilgal (1 Sam. 11, 15); see also 1 Kings 12, 1. 20; 1, 9 ff., 33 ff. It is safe to infer that in Jephthah's case also the acclamation took place at a sanctuary, probably at Mizpah, as the author of 10, 17 supposed. But 11, 11b, which appears to give direct testimony on this point, really refers not to these ceremonies, but to 11
Jephthah's vow; see next note.



JABBOK.

(9) *Before* JHVH, that is at a holy place, before the upright stone, altar, or idol, in which in olden times the god was believed to be; by which, for less crude conceptions, his presence was symbolized. The words have no appropriateness in their present connection, while they are essential to the description of Jephthah's vow (vv. 30 f.).

The displacement is one of the consequences of the long interpolation, vv. 12-28; see further on v. 31. 11

For *Mizpah*, see note on v. 34.

(10) On the general character of this interpolation see p. 77, ll. 1 ff. It may be surmised that this defense of Israel's rights in Gilead is not a mere piece of antiquarianism, but was produced at a time when the Sons of Lot were contesting with the Israelites (Gad) the possession of these territories. The style of this passage has no distinctive marks. In the text it is colored LIGHT PURPLE (R^{JE}), merely to indicate that it exhibits no traces of the peculiar manner of D or of the language of the latest redactors. 12

(11) The *Arnon*, now *Wâdy Môjib*, flows into the Dead Sea from the east, about midway between the northern and southern ends of the sea. Its course is a deep gorge with precipitous sides. The *Jabbok* (Gen. **33**, 17; *cf.* **32**, 30. 31; Josh. **13**, 27), now *Nahr ez-Zerqâ* (i. e. *The Blue River*), is the principal eastern affluent of the Jordan, rising near *'Ammân* and flowing in a generally northerly direction to about the middle of its course; then west, through a deep ravine between *Jebel 'Ajlûn* on the north and the very different physical region of the *Belqâ* (see note 4) on the south. 13

(12) *Cf.* Deut. **2**, 9. 19. The cities north of the Arnon belonged to the old territory of Moab. They were conquered by Israel under Omri (9th cent. B. C.), but recovered by Mesha, King of Moab (see on Is. **15**, 1-4), a generation later. In the Prophets they always appear as Moabite cities (Is. **15**. **16**; Jer. **48**; &c.). In the decadence of Israel, the Ammonites as well as the Moabites enlarged their borders at the expense of the Israelites (see Jer. **49**, 1; Ezek. **25**, 1 ff.; *cf.* 1 Macc. **5**, 6 ff.). 15

(13) This is not very clear; by the connection it can hardly refer to the crossing of the Red Sea (Exod. **13**, 18; **14**); perhaps it is an indistinct reminiscence of Num. **14**, 25^{b} and **20**, 14 ff. 16

(14) This verse is dependent on Num. **20**, 14-21; in Deut. **1**; **2**, 4-8 there is no reference to these negotiations with Edom. 17

(15) Of this embassy to Moab there is no account in the Pentateuch. The author probably reasoned that, if Israel proposed to pass around the southern end of the Dead Sea, the consent of Moab as well as Edom would be necessary; and he was especially concerned to emphasize the fact that the Israelites had respected the rights of Moab. With the close of the verse *cf.* Num. **20**, 1; Deut. **1**, 46.

(16) On this movement see Num. **20**, 22; **21**, 4. 10 f. 12 f. (*cf.* Deut. **2**). The Arnon is the boundary of Moab, Num. **21**, 13; **22**, 36. The Israelites marched along the edge of the desert, beyond the eastern frontier of Moab, till they were north of the latitude of the Arnon, and then turned westward; so Num. **21**, 13. 18

(17) According to Num. **21**, 26-30, the Amorites had recently conquered this territory north of the Arnon from Moab.—*Heshbon*, often named in the Prophets as one of the chief cities of Moab (see, *e. g.* Is. **15**, 4; Jer. **48**, 2), is the modern *Hesbân*, about sixteen miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea. It was on the debatable ground between Moab and Israel (Gad), and was doubtless more than once conquered and reconquered. 19

(18) See Num. **21**, 23; Deut. **2**, 32. *Jahaz* also was a town of northern Moab (Is. **15**, 4; Jer. **48**, 21. 34; Inscription of Mesha, l. 19); the site has not been recovered. 20

(19) This was exactly the territory now claimed by Ammon (v. 13); *cf.* Num. **21**, 24-26; Deut. **2**, 36 f. In the latter passages it is explicitly affirmed that Israel took no land from the Ammonites. 22

(20) Each people should possess the territory which its own god has given 24

it by conquest, and should recognize the same right in others.— *Chemosh* was 11
the national god of Moab, not of Ammon, whose god was *Milcom*; see
1 Kings 11,5.7.33; 2 Kings 23,13; Jer. 48,46; 49,1.3; *cf.* also the Inscription
of Mesha, King of Moab (see on Is. 15,4). The name here is not an accidental
slip on the part of the writer; the whole argument deals with Moab only,
though nominally addressed to Ammon.

(21) Balak, the King of Moab at the time of the Conquest, did not venture 25
to contest with Israel the possession of the land north of the Arnon (Num.
22,2 ff.). Should the present King be better able to do so?

(22) On *Heshbon* see note on v. 19.—*Jaazer* (Num. 21,32; 2 Sam. 24,5; 26
&c.) was eight or ten miles west of Rabbath-ammon (*'Ammân*), the boundary
of Ammon in that direction (Num. 21,24, LXX). For *Jaazer and the towns
which are along the Jordan*, the Received Text has *Aroer and the towns which are
along the Arnon*,—places much farther south.—*Three hundred years* is almost
exactly the sum of the years of oppression before, and of security after, the
successive Judges, which count up (exclusive of the Ammonite oppression, 10,8)
301 years. This agreement, which can hardly be accidental, shows that the
computation was made on the basis of the present chronology of the Book,
and is consequently very late. It is not quite certain, however, that the words
are part of the original text. The last clause of v. 26 (*at that time*) would be
more naturally understood of the first occupation of the region.

(23) V. 29 is the work of the editor who introduced vv. 12-28, a some- 29
what unskilful attempt to pick up the thread of the narrative. The Israelites
were already assembled, probably at Mizpah (v. 11); the invasion of Ammon
comes in due course in v. 32. The movements described in the text are quite
unintelligible. The first clause, however, may be original (before v. 32).

(24) Before the interpolation of vv. 12-28, vv. 30 and 31 stood after v. 11a: 31
having been made chief by the people, Jephthah vowed that if JHVH would
give him victory in the coming campaign he would offer Him a burnt-offering.
V. 11b followed v. 31: this vow was made with all solemnity at the holy place at
Mizpah. Then the spirit of JHVH came upon him (v. 29aα); he placed himself
at the head of the men of Gilead and marched against the enemy (v. 32).

That Jephthah vows to sacrifice a human victim, of his own household, is
as plain as words can make it. Whom it shall be is left to JHVH to designate:
whoever comes first out of the house to meet the returning conqueror will be
recognized by Jephthah as JHVH's choice. With the vow *cf.* Gen. 28,20-22;
1 Sam. 1,11; 2 Sam. 15,7 f.; for the sign, *cf.* Gen. 24,12 ff.

(25) Aroer is here not the Moabite city of that name on the Arnon (see 33
above, l. 13, note on v. 26), but *Aroer which is east of Rabbah* (Josh. 13,25),
an Ammonite town; the other places are unknown. The words *twenty cities*,
which stand in a strange connection, are very likely a gloss.

(26) Mizpah in Gilead, v. 29; Hos. 5,1; see note on Jud. 12,7. The site is 34
unknown; the identification of the place with Ramoth in Gilead is not probable.
From the present story it may be, perhaps, inferred that Mizpah was not very
far from the modern *es-Salt*, and we might then think of *Jebel Ôsha'*, an hour
north of that place; but the data are insufficient for more than a surmise.

(27) *Cf.* 1 Sam. 18,6 f. (21,11; 29,5); Exod. 15,20 f.

(28) The fine reticence with which the author draws a veil over the last 39
act of the tragedy is abused by those who interpret: *he consecrated her as a
virgin priestess*, or *shut her up for life in a cell*, which was not what Jephthah
had vowed to do at all.

(29) *Cf.* 8,1-3. The two stories are alike only in the arrogance with which 12,1
the great tribe of Ephraim asserts its right to have a hand in every fray.

Zaphon lay east of the Jordan, in the valley, not far from Succoth (Josh. 13, 27), in the vicinity of the principal ford crossing from the Highlands of Ephraim to Gilead. 12

(30) Jephthah speaks in the person of his countrymen of Gilead. In the foregoing narrative there is no mention of this attempt to get help from their kinsmen across the river. Such an appeal would be very natural, however, and may well be imagined to have preceded the calling of Jephthah. 2

(31) The latter part of this verse is in part an accidental repetition of a clause from v. 5, in part a series of glosses — unsuccessful attempts to make the text intelligible. 4

(32) With the seizure of the fords *cf.* 3, 28; 7, 24. A peculiarity in the pronunciation of the sibilants betrayed the Ephraimites, just as our *th* is the *shibboleth* of foreigners. Some scholars think that the Ephraimites said *skibboleth*, with *sk* instead of *sh* (*cf.* our *schedule*, i. e. *skedul*, in England commonly *shedul*). Others believe that the Ephraimites pronounced *shibboleth* with an initial *th*, *thibboleth*. Similarly, in the great massacre of the French in Sicily on March 31, 1282 A. D. (the *Sicilian Vespers*), the foreigners, it is said, were made to betray themselves by their pronunciation of the words *ceci e ciceri*: those who pronounced Italian *c* (*i. e.* English *ch*) as in French (*sesi e siseri*) were hewn down on the spot. 6

(33) The formula is the same that is used of the Minor Judges, and differs from that employed by D, *e. g.* 3, 29. 30. 7

Notes on 12, 8-15.

The second group of Minor Judges, including *Ibzan*, *Elon*, and *Abdon*; see above, 10, 1-5, and p. 53, ll. 49 ff.

(1) By this verse the succession of Judges following is annexed to the story of Jephthah, as the former series to the story of Abimelech by 10, 1. 8

Bethlehem is not the place of that name in Judah, but the less known Bethlehem in Zebulun (Josh. 19, 15), now *Beit Lahm*, about seven miles WNW of Nazareth.

(2) These family statistics are probably to be understood, as in the case of Jair (10, 3-5), of the branches and alliances of a considerable clan. 9

(3) The traditional pronunciation makes an artificial distinction between the man *Elon* and the town *Aijalon*; in the Hebrew consonantal text the names are written in precisely the same way. *Elon* is a Zebulonite clan (Gen. 46, 14; Num. 26, 26); its seat, where is the tomb of its eponymous ancestor, bears the same name. The site is unknown. 12

(4) *Cf.* 10, 4; 12, 9. The saddle-asses are evidence of wealth and rank; *cf.* 5, 10; 2 Sam. 16, 2; 13, 29. 14

(5) *Pirathon* was the home of one of David's heroes (2 Sam. 23, 30); *cf.* also 1 Macc. 9, 50. It is generally identified with *Fer'ata*, six miles WSW of Nâbulus (Shechem), which others take for Ophrah. 15

The district of Shalim, 1 Sam. 9, 4. The Received Text has: *in the land of Ephraim in the Mount of the Amalekites.*

Notes on Chapters 13-16

The Stories of Samson.

These chapters contain a collection of stories narrating the exploits and adventures of the Danite hero, Samson. The stories are connected with one another, and all come from the same source (J). They differ from the other stories in the Book in that Samson does not, like Ehud, Gideon, or Jephthah, deliver his people from their enemies, but single-handed and in his own quarrel makes havoc among the Philistines. These adventures did not lend themselves in the least to the moralizing bent of D, who has given them only the briefest of introductions (13, 1; *cf.* 15, 20 and 16, 31b); that he preserved them at all may be taken as evidence that they were too great favorites to be suppressed. More clearly than any other tales in the Book they bear the marks of popular origin, and doubtless had been repeated by generations of Israelite story-tellers before they were first written down. It is likely that the cycle was of gradual growth; it may be surmised that c. 13 is not as old as the rest. The stories of Samson are specimens of a kind of literature which has few other examples in the OT, and illustrate a side of old Israelite life and character not often represented in it.

Notes on Chapter 13.

13, 1 (1) The forty years probably cover the judgeship of Samson (15, 20; 16, 31) and that of Eli (20 years; 1 Sam. 4, 18, LXX).

2 (2) *Zorah* was one of the settlements of the Danites in the southwest (1, 34 f.); from which the greater part of the tribe subsequently migrated to the north (cc. 17. 18). It is the modern *Çur'ah*, on the northern side of *Wâdy Çurâr*, opposite *'Ain Shems* (Beth-shemesh).—The child of a long unfruitful marriage is peculiarly the gift of God (*cf.* 1 Sam. 1, 2; Luke 1, 7); this is a constant trait of the patriarchal story (Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel).

3 (3) On the Messenger of JHVH, see note on 6, 11.

4 (4) *Cf.* 1 Sam. 1, 15. Intoxicating drinks were made, not only from the grape (wine), but from other fruits, such as dates, and from grain (beer), perhaps also from honey (mead); distilled liquors were unknown. The prohibition to eat anything unclean probably refers to certain animal kinds and to the flesh of cattle that had died of disease or been accidentally killed (*cf.* the notes on Lev. 7, 24). The child, who is to be consecrated to God, must be kept from defilement even in his mother's womb.

5 (5) *Religious votary*, Heb. *nazîr* (AV, Nazirite). In the law-books the Nazirite binds himself by his own vow for a certain time, at the termination of which he shaves off his hair at the sanctuary. While the vow is on him he has to abstain from all the products of the vine; see especially Num. 6; *cf.* Jud. 13, 14; Amos 2, 11 f. Samson and Samuel (1 Sam. 1, 11) are devotees from birth and for life; but this is represented as exceptional.

6 (6) The Messenger appeared as a man; his words proved that he was an inspired man.

15 (7) *Cf.* Gen. 18, 3 ff.; Jud. 6, 17 ff.

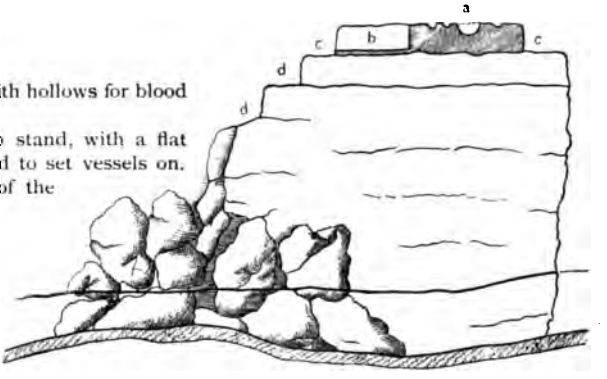
18 (8) *Cf.* Gen. 32, 29. The name is beyond Manoah's capacity to hear and understand; *cf.* Ps. 139, 6.

19 (9) *Cf.* Exod. 15, 11; Ps. 77, 14.

(10) The similarity of the scene to **6**,21 has led to conformation in the latter passage; see note there. The *altar* (in Hebrew *the slaughter-place*) is the *rock* (v. 19); it is possible, however, that the word *altar* has been substituted in v. 20 by a later hand (*cf.* 1 Sam. **14**,33–35). The rock altar here figured is from the neighborhood of Çur'ah. **13**,20

a: Surface of the altar, with hollows for blood or libations.
b: Place for the priest to stand, with a flat surface at his left hand to set vessels on.
c: Platform on all sides of the altar.
d: Steps.

Present surface of the ground.



ROCK ALTAR.

(11) See note on **6**,22. *God* (Heb. *elohim*) is any superhuman being; *cf.* 1 Sam. **28**,13 (Samuel's ghost). 22

(12) Namely, the birth of a son. Possibly the preceding clause is a gloss. 23

(13) *Mahaneh-Dan* (Dan's Camp) was west of Kirjath-jearim, in Judah (**18**,12), not *between Zorah and Eshtaol*, where Samson's tomb was (**16**,31). Perhaps neither of these conflicting topographical notices is original. 25

Notes on Chapters 14.15.

The narrative is homogeneous, but has been retouched in various places by later editors or scribes,—it is not always possible to say which. Particularly in c. **14**, a misunderstanding of the nature of Samson's marriage has led to a series of changes which cause not a little confusion.

(1) *Timnath* is the modern *Tibneh*, about an hour west of *'Ain Shems* (Beth-shemesh), and somewhat farther southwest of *Çur'ah* (Zorah), Samson's home. **14**,1

(2) *Cf.* Gen. **24**,3 f.; **26**,34 f.; **28**,1 f. and 8 f. 3

(3) The opprobrious epithet is applied almost exclusively to the Philistines (*cf.* **15**,18; 1 Sam. **14**,6; **17**,26.36; &c.); the peoples of Palestine seem generally to have practiced circumcision. The Philistines were of a different race, invaders from the north, most likely from Cyprus or southeastern Asia Minor.

(4) The unusual word translated *grievance* seems to mean a pretext for hostilities, a *casus belli*; see 2 Kings **5**,7.—It is not said that Samson's father refused to comply with his son's request; but that the author intended to convey the idea is clear from what follows, and it has been with some plausibility conjectured that a statement to this effect originally stood at the end of v. 4. Since his father declines to negotiate a marriage in the ordinary way, Samson, on his own account, contracts a marriage of a different kind, in which the wife, instead of coming into her husband's family, remains in her own father's house. A later writer, either misunderstanding this relation, or taking offense at it, altered the text of the verses following, making it appear that Samson's parents 4

yielded, and that an ordinary marriage was contemplated. The changes were not, however, sufficiently thorough and consistent to efface the original representation. 14

(5) The first of the changes spoken of in the last note. 5

(6) Lit., *leaped, pounced upon him*, indicating the suddenness and violence of the seizure; see v. 19; **15**,14; 1 Sam. **10**,6.10; **11**,6; **18**,10; **16**,13; also (with other verbs) Jud. **3**,10; **6**,34; **13**,25. The *spirit of JHVH* is here superhuman strength. 6

(7) An addition consequent upon that in v. 5; see above, notes 4 and 5.

(8) The words *to marry her* are also an erroneous addition; the following narrative shows that he was on his way home to Zorah when he found the honey in the carcass of the lion, and that it was in Zorah he met his parents. 8

(9) See verse 16^b (p. 28, l. 32). 9

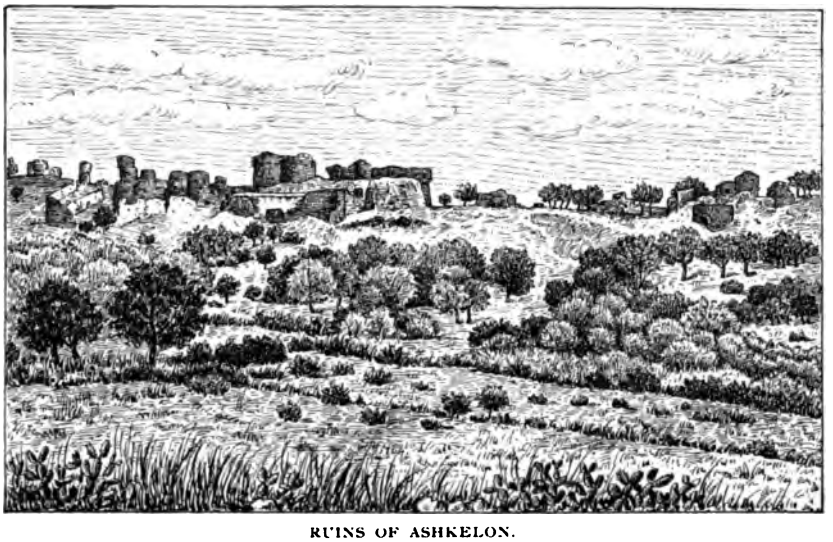
(10) *His father* is not the least absurd of the editor's alterations. 10

(11) The only possible understanding of the present text is, that when the Philistines saw how formidable Samson was (or, according to LXX, because they were afraid of him), they appointed thirty special guards to see that he did no mischief. In the original story, on the contrary, Samson chose thirty young Philistines as his companions to take the place which in an ordinary marriage would have been filled by his own young kinsmen and friends. 11

(12) A caveat against the unfair means they employed to learn the secret. 12

(13) Their vain effort to solve the riddle for six days accords well with the vehemence of their speech in v. 15, but is hard to reconcile with v. 17, according to which Samson's bride teased him the whole week to tell her the riddle. We must either assume a certain inconsistency in the author's representation or regard the words *for six days* and *on the seventh day* (vv. $14^b.15^a$) as glosses. 14

(14) The week's festivities preceded the consummation of the marriage. 18



RUINS OF ASHKELON.

(15) Ashkelon is two days' journey from Timnath, on the sea-coast. It has been conjectured, with much plausibility, that this raid is the afterthought of an editor to whom it seemed unbecoming that Samson should run away without paying the wager. It has no consequences in the following story. 19

(16) Angry at being betrayed by his comrades and his bride, Samson rushed away, without consummating the marriage, thus inflicting the keenest disgrace on the bride and her family. To repair this disgrace, the bride's father gave her on the spot to Samson's groomsman, and the interrupted wedding was completed. 14,20

(17) The season of the year is particularly noted to prepare for vv. 4 ff. 15,1

(18) *i. e.*, I cannot be blamed for retaliating upon the Philistines. 3

(19) The fox is a solitary animal, but the jackal is gregarious; hence it has been often surmised that Samson's foxes were jackals. It would not be remarkable if the same Hebrew word included both foxes and jackals; but there is not sufficient evidence that this was actually the case.—Some of the grain was cut and in the shock; some was still standing. The words at the end of the verse are probably a later addition exaggerating the mischief Samson wrought. 4

(20) The exact meaning of the phrase rendered *hip and thigh* (lit., *leg on thigh*) is not known, nor does the context explain how Samson made this great slaughter among his enemies. 8

(21) The *Etam* of 2 Chron. **11**,6 and Josephus (*Ant.* viii, **7**, 3) is doubtless the modern *'Ain 'Atân*, about half an hour south of Bethlehem; and most scholars assume that the Cliff Etam in our story, which was in Judah (vv. 9 ff.), was in the same neighborhood. Some lay the scene of Jud. **15**,9 ff. in the vicinity of *'Artûf*, much nearer Timnath and Zorah, where in an almost vertical cliff is a large cave, difficult and dangerous of access.

(22) *Lehi*; see vv. 14–19. The site is unknown. The name was probably given it on account of some resemblance in the configuration of the rocks to the under-jaw of an animal; see note 26. 9

(23) Compare chapter **16**, verses 9 and 12. 14

(24) The only weapon within reach was the fresh jawbone of an ass, heavy and tough; an old and weathered bone would have been too light and brittle for such a use. Compare the slaughter of the Philistines by Shamgar with his ox-goad (**3**,31), and by Shammah (2 Sam. **23**,11 f.). 15

(25) In Hebrew: *Bilĕhi ha-ḥămôr ḥamôr himmartîm*, lit., *I piled them in heaps*, or perhaps, *I flayed them clean*. In the translation an attempt has been made to imitate the pun. 16

(26) VV. 17–19 contain a series of popular etymologies, explaining the names of certain places in the vicinity of Lehi: *Ramath-lehi* ('Height of Lehi') is the place where Samson threw away (*ramáh*) the jawbone (*lĕhi*); *Ên-haqqôré* ('Partridge Spring') commemorates his calling (*qará*) on God for help; *Maktêsh* ('The Mortar,' *cf.* Zeph. **1**,11) is the hollow which God cleft, and from which the water gushed in answer to his prayer. It is not improbable that Samson's singular weapon, the jawbone of an ass, is in like manner derived from the name of a place, *Lehi ha-ḥamôr*; cf. *Beer-lahai-roi*, Gen. **16**,14, and the Arabic *Láhy jámal* ('Camel's jawbone'). 17

(27) See **16**,31. It has been conjectured that this closing formula was inserted here by an editor who omitted the tragic close of Samson's career (c. **16**), which was subsequently restored by another hand. With the formula itself *cf.* **10**,1 ff.; **12**,7 ff. 20

Notes on 16,1–3.

The short story of this exploit has no connection with either the preceding or the following narratives, but no doubt comes from the same source.

(1) Gaza, the most southern city of Palestine, on the road to Egypt through the desert, was from the earliest times a place of great commercial and military importance, and is still a city of 16,000 inhabitants. **16**,1

(2) V. 3 hardly permits us to suppose that the Philistines were lying in 2

wait for Samson at the gate of the city; and v. 2b seems to imply that, confident that he could not leave the city after the gates were closed, they resolved to do nothing till the following morning; the second clause of v. 2 is therefore probably a gloss exaggerating the precautions they took and the wonderful character of his escape. 16

(3) He pulled up the gate-posts, with the two leaves of the gate and the bar by which they were secured; *cf.* v. 14.—As Hebron is not less than twelve hours distant from Gaza, many have thought that a hill nearer the latter must be meant. Latin tradition has fixed on *El-Muntâr*, only a quarter of an hour outside the walls of the city, and not even in the direction of Hebron. 3

Notes on 16,4-31.

(1) The Valley of Sorek is probably the great *Wâdy Çurâr*, in which *Çur'ah* (Zorah) also lies; the ruins of *Sûrîk* are three-quarters of an hour west of *Çur'ah*. 4

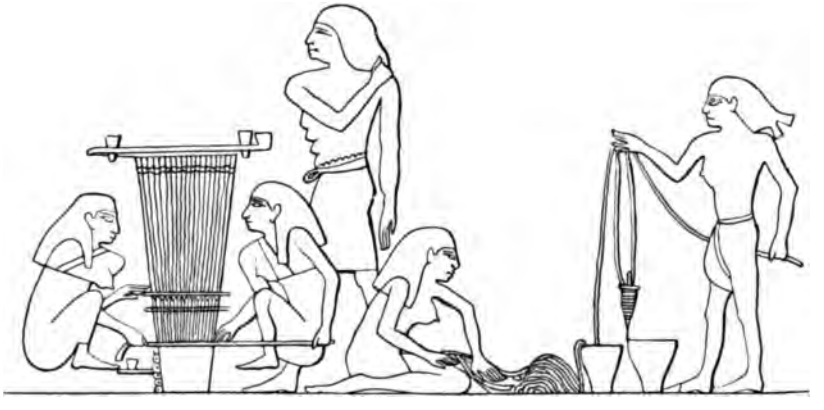
(2) They imagined that there was some secret about his strength, which, if they could come by it, would enable them to get the better of him. 5

(3) The bowstrings were doubtless made from the intestines of animals. Green gut, not yet dried, would not so readily fray or split, and could be more securely knotted. Seven is a charmed number. 7

(4) *Cf.* v. 12 and 15, 14. The men who were concealed in the inner apartment did not disclose themselves, but waited to see the result of the experiment. 9

(5) *New ropes*, as in 15, 13. 11

(6) The Hebrew text is defective; but the Greek Versions and the parallel places enable us to restore it. The loom was a simple upright frame the 13.14



EGYPTIAN LOOM.

posts of which were planted in the earth.

Seated on the ground before the loom with Samson's head in her lap, Delilah passed the long strands of his hair in and out of the standing warp with her fingers, and beat it up to a firm texture with a pointed pin of wood. He was thus most securely fastened in a prostrate position. But he sprang to his feet, pulling the posts of the loom out of the ground by the hair of his head.

The Egyptian loom shown in the cut, primitive as it appears, represents a considerable advance upon this method of weaving.

(7) Compare chapter **14**, verse 17. (8) See chapter **13**, verse 5. **16**,16.17

(9) See 1 Sam. **18**,12; **28**,15. Samson's superhuman strength was given 20
him by the Spirit of JHVH (**13**,25; see note on **14**,6), which now left him.

(10) Grinding at the hand-mill was hard and menial labor. Among the 21
Romans, slaves were often punished by being set to work at the mill; and under the Theodosian Code the same penalty was inflicted upon freemen for certain misdemeanors.

(11) Samson's strength is in his sacred locks; before he can perform such 22
a feat as is narrated in vv. 28-30 they must grow again.

(12) Dagon was the chief deity of the Philistines; besides the temple at Gaza 23
he had one at Ashdod (1 Sam. **5**,1 ff.; 1 Macc. **10**,84; **11**,4), and doubtless in the other cities of the Pentapolis. Several places bearing the name Beth-dagon were also ancient seats of his worship, which was wide-spread in Palestine before the Philistine invasion; *cf.* also *Dagan-takala*, the name of a man, in the Amarna dispatches. Of the character of the god and his worship we know no more than may be gathered from the passage before us and 1 Sam. **5**,1 ff. That Dagon was represented in the form of a fish, or half man half fish, as medieval Jewish commentators aver, rests only upon a possible etymology (Hebrew *dag* 'fish'). If, as seems probable, Dagon is the same as the Babylonian god Dagan, this etymology must be given up as false. Older writers saw in the name the Hebrew and Phœnician *dagan* ('grain'), and make Dagon a god of agriculture; which is probably no more correct than the other etymology.

(13) See chapter **15**, verses 4 ff., 14 ff. 24

(14) When Samson has sufficiently amused them, perhaps by harmless feats 27-30
of strength, he is left to rest. He asks the attendant who leads him about, to let him lean against the columns which support the roof. By a Herculean effort he overthrows these columns, and brings down the whole edifice in ruins, burying in its fall the multitude who were assembled to witness his performance, and himself perishing with them. We are, of course, not to think of the temple proper, but of a building for the use of the worshipers, probably a hall for sacrificial feasts. The text gives ground for the conjecture that the three thousand men and women on the roof are a later addition to the story. Much ingenuity has been expended in the endeavor to explain the architectural construction of this building; see particularly Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN, *Parentalia*, p. 359.

(15) The destruction of all these Philistines would be but partial retaliation. 28

Notes on Chapters 17.18.

The first of the two stories supplementary to the Book of Judges; see p. 46, ll. 30 ff. More than one hand has evidently been at work upon the narrative. The origin of Micah's idol (or idols), the way in which he got his priest, the sending out and return of the Danite spies, the robbery of Micah's temple, the duration of the sanctuary at Dan, are all related with a great deal of unnecessary and confusing repetition; in some places positive contradictions occur. It is peculiarly difficult to decide whether these phenomena are to be ascribed to interpolations and glosses, or to the combination of two parallel versions of the story. The latter hypothesis appears, on the whole, the more probable. In

the text the main, and apparently older, strand of the narrative is ascribed to J, chiefly on account of its resemblance in spirit and style to the stories of Samson, the first version of the history of Gideon, and other parts of the Book which are probably derived from that source; the other to E, the second chief source of the Book of Judges. The analysis would not be materially different if the latter should be attributed to a later hand, or to editorial interpolation.

The first version ran substantially as follows: A man of Mount Ephraim owned a temple containing an *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and consecrated one of his sons as priest (**17**, 1. 5). Afterwards a wandering Levite from Bethlehem in Judah came that way in search of employment, and was hired by Micah, who installed him in the place of his son (vv. 8-10. 11[a]. 12[b]. 13). The Danites, who had as yet found no place to settle, sent out an exploring party (**18**, 1. 2[a] in part). They came to Micah's home and lodged there (v. 2[b]). Falling in with his priest, they learned of him his relation to Micah, and had him consult the oracle for them, and received a favorable response (v. 3[b] in part, vv. 4[b]. 5. 6). Continuing their journey, they came to Laish (v. 7 in part); and returning, urged their clansmen to march against it, assuring them that it would be an easy conquest (vv. 8-10 in part). Six hundred fighting men of the tribe, with their families, set out on the expedition (v. 11 in part, vv. 12. 13). Arrived at Micah's village, the spies informed them that it contained an *Ephod* and *Teraphim* (v. 14). The armed band halted at the gate, while the five spies went to the house to take the idols (vv. 16. 18[a]). The priest challenged them, but was speedily persuaded to join the party and become the priest of the tribe (v. 17[b] in part, vv. 18[b]. 19). He took the images; they joined the main body, and marched away. Micah and the villagers pursued them, but were rudely repulsed (vv. 20-26). The Danites took Laish, and set up Micah's idols in their sanctuary (vv. 27-29. 30[1]).

This story is, without question, very old. It relates the origin of the image in the famous sanctuary of Dan without any trace of religious antipathy, and speaks of the *Ephod* with as little prejudice as the original author in c. **8** speaks of that set up by Gideon at Ophrah. The writer evidently enjoys telling of the stroke by which the Danites got possession of it, and of the owner's discomfiture. The picture which he gives of the social and religious state of the times is of the highest value. The rest of the chapter has at least no affinity to the post-Exilic additions to cc. **19-21**; there is nothing to show that it is later than other parts of the Book which are attributed to E.

(1) The name, Micah, and the scene of the story seem to be common to both versions. **17**, 1

(2) Dreading his mother's curse and the anger of God for the sacrilege committed in appropriating a consecrated thing, he makes restitution of the stolen silver. There seems to be some derangement of the text; the words, *I sacredly consecrate the silver*, &c. (v. 3[b]), seem to be necessary after *and also saidst* in v. 2; and v. 3[a] is premature before v. 4[a]. The restoration proposed in the translation is the simplest remedy for all these difficulties. 2-4

(3) The mother had added to the curse a dedication which made the silver sacrosanct, so that the thief incurred the perils of sacrilege by keeping it. 3

(4) The curse launched at the head of the thief cannot be unsaid, but it may be neutralized by a blessing; see 2 Sam. **21**, 3; Exod. **12**, 32. Curses and blessings were not to the old Israelites mere wishes or prayers; the word has a magical potency, and is a real cause of good or evil. 2

(5) The first word (*pésel*) properly denotes a carved wooden idol, but is not infrequently employed generically for *idol*, without regard to the material (see Is. **40**, 19; **44**, 10; Jer. **10**, 14, &c.); the second word (*massekáh*) denotes 4

usually an idol of precious metal, cast in a mold. In the present passage it is 17
highly improbable that the author meant that Micah had *two* images, one of wood, and one of metal; see also **18**, 30 f. More likely he spoke throughout only of a *pésel*; some one who observed that the idol was of metal then glossed it by the more exact term, *massekáh*.

Various explanations have been given of the fact that only two hundred shekels of the silver (*i. e.* about 8½ pounds weight) were used in making the idol; the truth seems to be that the consecration should not be understood as a dedication of the whole sum to God, but of an indefinite part of it, which made the whole inviolable.

(6) Lit. *a god-house*; a shrine in which the idol stood. Such a building 5
was necessary only where there was an image, or other sacred object, like the Ark of JHVH, to keep in it. The older and commoner representatives of the deity, the sacred post (*asheráh*, see note on **6**, 25) or pillar (*maṣṣebáh*, **9**, 6; *cf.* **2**, 2), stood beside the altar on the high-place under the open sky.

(7) The *Ephod*, like that which Gideon made of seventeen hundred shekels of gold and set up at Ophrah, where it was worshiped by the Israelites (**8**, 27), was clearly an idol (see **18**, 24); but of what form we do not know; see also 1 Sam. **21**, 9. The *Ephod* was employed by the priest in consulting the oracle of JHVH; see 1 Sam. **14**, 18 (LXX; *cf.* 3); **23**, 6. 9; **30**, 7. To carry the *Ephod* before JHVH is the prerogative of the priesthood (1 Sam. **2**, 28; **22**, 18). The *Teraphim*, which are coupled with the *Ephod* in Hos. **3**, 4 also, were idols (see Gen. **31**, 19; *cf.* 30; **35**, 2. 4; 1 Sam. **19**, 13–16), and were used in divining (2 Kings **23**, 24; Ezek. **21**, 21; Zech. **10**, 2). It has been surmised, on insufficient grounds, that they were household gods, or images of the ancestors.

(8) This verse is an editorial note explaining how such irregularities were 6
possible; *cf.* **21**, 25; also **18**, 1; **19**, 1.

(9) The young Levite of Judah residing in Micah's neighborhood, who 7
is to him as one of his own sons, and becomes his priest (vv. 7. 11b. 12a), is the counterpart of the Levite from Bethlehem who comes in his wanderings to Micah's home, and is hired by him as his priest. The words *from Bethlehem in Judah* were probably inserted by the editor from the premises of v. 8 in the parallel narrative. *Levite* must here denote his calling, not his extraction; he was a professional priest, though of the clan of Judah, just as the Ephraimite Samuel was brought up as a priest at Shiloh. The relation of the Levite priests to the old tribe of Levi (Gen. **34**, 25–31; **49**, 5–7) is obscure. Probably the remnants of that broken tribe, like those of Simeon, attached themselves to Judah; the Levites in the Book of Judges are all in some way connected with Judah.

(10) In the original context this Levite must have been introduced in some 8
way; perhaps simply, *Now there was a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah.*

(11) *Father* is a title of respect given to prophets, priests, the king's 10
ministers, and others; it does not necessarily imply that the Levite was advanced in years.—The last words of the verse may be an accidental error, corrected by the scribe in the following verse, or a fragment of the other source.

(12) This first clause would also be entirely in place in the other version 12
of the story after v. 11a.

(13) Micah is elated that he has now a trained priest to take charge of 13
his shrine and oracle. His son, who had first filled the place, had not the same skill.

(14) This first half-verse is an editorial comment on the preceding chapter; **18**, 1
see **17**, 6.

(15) The Danites first tried to establish themselves on the southwest of Ephraim, but were crowded back by the native population (**1**, 34) into the

little district about Zorah and Eshtaol. They now resolved to try their fortune **18** in another quarter.

(16) The duplication in this and the following verses is obvious, but the 2 literary analysis has only slight clues to work with, and its results are correspondingly uncertain.

(17) The redundancy in both question and answer points to the union of 3.4 closely similar accounts.— In what way the Danites recognized the young Levite is not explained; probably it did not occur to the writer that the question could be asked.

(18) The consultation of the oracle may have been related in both accounts; 5.6 vv. 5. 6, however, appear to be homogeneous, and to be derived from the older narrative. The response was probably obtained by casting lots in some way; see especially 1 Sam. **14**, 40 ff. (LXX).

(19) The phrase *living without fear*, &c., does not grammatically agree with 7 the foregoing noun (*the people*); in its original context it must have been preceded by some such words as, *they found the city*, or *Laish.— In Phœnician fashion*, an unwarlike trading people.— The words rendered in RV *for there was none in the land, possessing authority, who might put them to shame in anything*, are corrupt; the text must be emended in conformity to v. 10.— For *they had nothing to do with any one else* (Heb. *adám*) most Greek manuscripts have, *with Syria* (Heb. *Arám*), which would suit the context equally well; the difference in the Hebrew alphabet is very slight (*r*=ר, *d*=ד); *cf.* p. 70, l. 49.



QARYET EL-'INEB.

(20) In verses 8-10 the difficulty of separating the sources is much 8-10 increased by the disorder of the text; a completely satisfactory restoration and analysis are hardly possible. The question in v. 8b seems to belong to the same source with v. 2a (*bidding them: Go, examine the land*). At the end of the verse the verb is lacking; the simplest emendation is, *What word do ye bring back?* (*cf.* 2 Sam. **24**, 13; Num. **13**, 26). Upon this the clauses assigned in the text to E would naturally follow. At the beginning of v. 9 some recensions of the Greek Bible have a long addition: *We entered the land and went about in it as far as Laish; and we found the people who inhabit it living without fear after the Phœnician fashion, and they are remote from Sidon and have nothing to do with Syria. But arise! let us march against them*, &c. Part of this may, perhaps, be genuine.

(21) The clan of the Danites which migrated from Zorah and Eshtaol 11 mustered six hundred fighting men, who seem to have been the major portion of the tribe, since they gave the tribal name to their new settlement. But, as the story of Samson shows, some of the tribe remained in their old seats.

(22) Kirjath-jearim (1 Sam. 6, 21; 7, 1 f.) lay nine or ten miles west of Jerusalem, on the road to Lydda. It has been conjecturally identified with the modern *Qaryet el-'Ineb* (*Abû Ghôsh*), see p. 90; by others with *Khirbet 'Erma*. The topographical gloss at the end of the verse is probably correct, though at variance with that in 13, 25. 18, 12

(23) The verse is a parallel to vv. 13 f., just as v. 3 is to v. 2b. 15

(24) The narrative is much confused; probably not so much from the union of different sources as through glosses and accidental corruption. J seems to have related simply and briefly that the six hundred armed men halted at the gate of the village while the five spies went up to Micah's house, and seized his idols. V. 16, which exhibits some grammatical irregularities, seems to be an awkward redactional doublet to the end of v. 17; v. 17, with the exception of the last words, is of the same character. At the close of v. 17 the text is not intact; we have either to supply the predicate, *stood at the gate*, as in v. 16 (*cf.* v. 17, *the priest was standing at the gate*), or make the six hundred men the subject of v. 18, and suppose that the whole armed band marched to Micah's house. The former is the more probable alternative. It seems from v. 22b that the villagers were in the fields, so that the Danites had got some distance away before Micah's neighbors could be collected for the pursuit. 16-18



LAISH.

(25) The priest was not at the entrance of the village, but at the sanctuary. He was easily persuaded to cast in his lot with them, and himself carried off his master's image and oracle (v. 20). 18

(26) Verses 19-26 are throughout by one hand. The story is admirably told; the author's sympathy is evidently with the bold robbers rather than with their victim. 19-26

(27) See 2 Samuel, chapter 17, verse 8. 18,25

(28) *Laish*, or *Léshem* (Josh. 19,47), under its later name, *Dan*, often 27
mentioned in the OT as the northern limit of the land of Israel, was not far from the Lebanon and the sources of the Jordan. The name seems to be preserved in the modern *Tel el-Qâdi*, i. e. 'Hill of the Judge' (*qâdi*, 'judge,' is the Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew *Dan*), about an hour distant from *Bâniâs* (Paneas, Cæsarea Philippi). On the summit of the hill is now the tomb of a Moslem saint, under a magnificent oak tree, as shown in the engraving on p. 91. On the west side of the hill is a great basin (see full page illustration facing p. 34). It is fed by one of the largest springs in the world, and is looked upon by the people as the true source of the Jordan.

Beth-rehob was in the time of David a petty Aramean kingdom (1 Sam. 14,47, LXX; 2 Sam. 10,6.8), but its exact situation is not known. The note on the site of Laish may be a gloss.

(29) These words are also probably a gloss. The last clause of the verse 29
is of the same origin.

(30) VV. 30.31 are parallel. Jonathan is probably not the young Judean 30
Levite of 17,7, but *the man* of 17,8. It is possible that his pedigree originally stood before the latter verse, rather than where it now stands.—For *the idol* (Heb. *pésel*), it may be conjectured that the author wrote, *the Ephod*.

(31) *Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses.* The later Jews, by inserting an *n* above the line in the last name (*mⁿsh*), indicated their opinion that this idolatrous priest might better have been a descendant of Manasseh, the idolatrous king of Judah.—Our verse proves that the priests of Dan, in the 8th century, traced their lineage to Moses, as other priestly families in Israel did (see especially Deut. 33,8).

(32) *The depopulation of the land* may be the deportation of the inhabitants of Northern Galilee by Tiglath-pileser in 734 B.C., or the overthrow of the Kingdom of Israel by Sargon in 721. It is difficult to believe, however, that the whole verse is of so late a date, and we are tempted to conjecture that the author wrote, *unto this day*, which a later editor changed to the present text.

(33) When the house of God at Shiloh (1 Sam. 1,7.24; 3,15) was 31
destroyed is not certainly known. It is generally believed to have fallen in the Philistine wars; but Jeremiah's references to the fate of Shiloh (7,12.14) might suggest a more recent date. *Cf.* the note on 21,19.

Notes on Chapters 19-21.

In this story of the outrage at Gibeah and the sanguinary vengeance of Israel upon the tribe of Benjamin two elements are readily recognized; one of which is closely akin to the older narrative in cc. 17.18, the other strikingly resembles the latest stratum of the so-called Priestly Narrative (P) in the Hexateuch (see Notes on Leviticus, p. 56, l. 26; p. 58, l. 7), and the Book of Chronicles. To the former belong c. 19 almost entirely, 21,15-23 in the main, and the original account of the battle and its consequences in 20,29.36b-44 (in the main).47; to the latter, most of 20.21,1-14. The secondary element seems to be not an originally distinct narrative combined with the older version by a redactor, but in part a supplement to the original account of the war, in part a substitute for it, in which a contemporary of the Chronicler illustrates the way in which such a crime should have been—and therefore must have been—punished by the Congregation. The dependence of this Midrash upon the older story is not questioned, even by those who think that it once existed separately. It is possible that the older story was itself composite; 19,5-15, in particular,

give ground for this opinion; but the attempts at analysis have not been hitherto very successful.

(1) See 17, 6; 18, 1; 19, 1; 21, 25. 19, 1

(2) The remote part of Mount Ephraim is probably the northern part; it is noteworthy that neither here nor in 17. 18 is a town named.

(3) See Gen. 34, 3; and especially Hos. 2, 14. 3

(4) Concubinage was a kind of marriage; the girl's father was the man's father-in-law (see also vv. 5. 9). The relation was perfectly legitimate, whether the concubine was a slave or a free woman; and children born of such a union had a right of inheritance (Gen. 21, 11). 4

(5) In vv. 5–9 the Levite is repeatedly on the point of setting out, but is persuaded to postpone his departure. The primary narrative seems to be found in vv. 4–6a. 8aβ. 9 (in part). The rest may be attributed to a second source, as has been done above, or to the amplifying hand of an editor. If the former alternative be adopted, we should understand that in the second version the man stayed but one night at Bethlehem; the fusion of the two accounts has given the editor his *fifth day*. 5–9

(6) In v. 9 the Hebrew text is seriously corrupt; the restoration adopted follows the oldest Greek Version. In view of the unusual expression, the last words are probably to be regarded as a gloss. 9

(7) The repetitions and redundancies continue, and raise the same questions as in vv. 5–9. The analysis in the translation is merely tentative. 10–15

(8) Jerusalem is here called *Jebus* with reference to its non-Israelite population (v. 12); see also Josh. 15, 8; 18, 16. 28; 1 Chron. 11, 4 f. There is no evidence that Jebus was the older name of Jerusalem, as is often asserted; the latter name is found not only in the oldest texts in the OT (see Jud. 1, 7. 21; Josh. 15, 63; 2 Sam. 5, 6), but also in the Amarna tablets (ca. 1400 B.C.). The road from Bethlehem north would lead them, in about an hour and a half, past Jerusalem on the west.—At the end of the verse some Greek manuscripts add, for the sake of completeness, *and his servant*. It is possible that the whole clause is a gloss from v. 3. 10

(9) The refusal to spend the night in a city of strangers puts in a stronger light the base violation of the rights of hospitality by the Israelites of Gibeah. 12

(10) Ramah is the modern *er-Râm*, two hours north of Jerusalem; Gibeah is located by Robinson and others at *Tel el-Fûl*, about half-way between Jerusalem and er-Râm. Gibeah of Benjamin (see p. 94; *cf.* 1 Sam. 13, 2. 15; 14, 16) is probably the same which, as the home of Saul, is called Gibeah of Saul (1 Sam. 11, 4; Is. 10, 29, &c.); and is to be distinguished from Geba (Isaiah, *l. c.*). 13

(11) The first evidence of the churlishness of the inhabitants; contrast Gen. 24, 29–31; 18, 2 ff.; 19, 1–3. 15

(12) In the author's time the explanation that the inhabitants of Gibeah were Benjamites cannot have been necessary; probably the note that the one good man in the town was a stranger is also a later addition. 16

(13) *Cf.* Gen. 24, 25. 32.—(14) *Cf.* Gen. 19, 2 f.—(15) *Cf.* Gen. 24, 32; 18, 4. 19–21

(16) VV. 22–24 have a striking resemblance to Gen. 19, 4–8; it is not unlikely that the similarity of the situation has led to some conformation of the story in Judges to that of Lot. V. 24, in particular, is, not without reason, thought to be an interpolation from Gen. 19, 8. 22–24

(17) The Levite's conduct in exposing the woman to save himself strikes us as dastardly; but the author evidently did not so regard it; *cf.* Gen. 19, 8; 12, 10 ff.; 20. 26. 25

(18) The words used are the proper terms for cutting up the carcass of an animal; see 1 Sam. 11, 7; 1 Kings 18, 23. 33; Lev. 1, 6; &c. 29

(19) The text is restored in conformity with the oldest Greek Version. 30

(20) The characteristics of the secondary element in the narrative appear very clearly in vv. 1.2, in the fondness for prodigious numbers, and in a habitual representation of Israel as a *Congregation* instead of a people or a nation, an ecclesiastical body acting as by a common impulse under the leadership of its *Elders*. In all these traits we recognize the product of an age when the national life of Israel was a thing of the remote past, and could only be imagined under the likeness of a Church. No greater contrast to the old stories of the Judges could be conceived.—The last words of v. 1 belong to the older source, but hardly followed immediately the first clause. Mizpah in Benjamin was an ancient holy place; see 1 Sam. 7,5 ff.; 10,17 ff.; Jer. 40,6 ff.; 1 Macc. 3,44 ff. It is generally believed to be the modern *Nebî Samwîl*, about two hours north of Jerusalem, and about two miles from *Tel el-Fûl* (Gibeah; see note 10). 20,1

(21) *The assembly of the people of God*, the people assembled in their religious capacity; 1 Sam. 17,47; 1 Kings 8,14.55.65; frequent in P. 2

(22) The numbers are on the same scale with the standing 600,000 of P. To realize how exaggerated they are we need but remember that the Roman army with which Vespasian and Titus put down the revolt of the Jews in 66-70 A. D., consisted of about 60,000 men of all arms. The German army which besieged Paris in 1870 numbered about 240,000.



GIBEAH OF BENJAMIN.

(23) It has been conjectured that v. 3ª, in its original context, stood before v. 14. 3

(24) He might very well describe their purpose as an attempt on his life, since his concubine actually died under their maltreatment. 5

(25) The conclusion of the sentence (*until we have avenged this wrong*) is wanting. 8

(26) It is doubtful whether any part of these verses belongs to the original narrative. In the last words of v. 9 the verb, *we will go up*, seems to have been accidentally omitted; *cf.* then v. 18, perhaps in a tertiary stratum. 9 f.

(27) The detail of one man in every ten to collect provisions for the host belongs to the later version; it is only for its huge army that an organized commissariat is necessary. 10

(28) *The city* must be Gibeah, but this movement seems premature; see vv. 18.19. V. 11 seems to be one of the latest additions to the chapter. 20, 11

(29) See note on v. 3. 14

(30) The statements about the numbers of the Benjamites do not exactly tally: our verse gives them a total of 25,700 (Heb. 26,700); according to vv. 44-47 their losses amounted to 25,000, while 600 escaped; v. 35 gives their loss as 25,100. The text has suffered at the end of v. 15 and the beginning of v. 16, apparently by the accidental repetition of the words *seven hundred young warriors*. 15

(31) The skill of the Benjamites as slingers was famous in later times; see 1 Chron. **12**, 1 f. This skill may be noted here to explain how the Israelites lost so many men in the first two engagements, while the Benjamites lost none, — if this does not attribute to the writer too subtle reflections. 16

(32) The author's conception of the unity of Israel is such that he thinks it necessary formally to except Benjamin from the levy raised to make war on that tribe. 17

(33) V. 18 is perhaps a later addition to the narrative; in the sequel nothing of any such precedence of Judah appears; *cf.* **1**, 1 f. 18

(34) V. 19, parallel to v. 20, seems to belong to the older narrative, in which it would follow v. 14, and may have been continued by v. 29. Possibly, however, the old story also told of a repulse of Israel on the first day; see note on v. 22. — From Mizpah, where they assembled, they marched on Gibeah. 19

(35) See vv. 22.30; Gen. **14**, 8. 20

(36) VV. 22 and 23 conflict; after the Israelites were in line of battle on the second day, they could not go to Beth-el, and weep the day before. Either the older version also told of a repulse on the first day and a renewal of the fight on the second (v. 22), or, if v. 22 belongs to the younger writer, v. 23 is a still later addition from vv. 26-28. The latter alternative is perhaps the more probable; v. 24 was then inserted to recover the connection, and v. 25 is the original sequel of v. 22. 22.23

(37) Beth-el was three hours or more north of Gibeah. The Israelites made the most strenuous efforts to propitiate JHVH by fasting and tears as well as sacrifices; see **21**, 2.4; Ezra **10**, 1; Joel **2**, 15.17; 1 Sam. **7**, 6, &c. 26

(38) Verses 27^{b}.28^{a}, which interrupt the connection, are late glosses, to explain how they came to offer sacrifices and consult the oracle at Beth-el, instead of Shiloh, where, according to the late theory, the Ark and the central sanctuary were from the days of Joshua to those of Eli. The same reflection has led interpreters to take *beth-el* appellatively, as in AV: *they came unto the house of God* (at Shiloh). The name of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, would fix the time of the action in the first generation after the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan, to which period it is accordingly assigned by Josephus and others; but the mention of Phinehas comes only from a very late editor or scribe. 27.28

(39) V. 29, which conflicts with v. 30, comes from the old story; it has its continuation in v. 36^{b}, vv. 37^{a}.38.39 (in part).40.41.44^{a}.47. The stratagem has a striking resemblance to that employed by Joshua against Ai (Josh. **8**, 14 ff.; *cf.* especially Jud. **20**, 37 ff. with Josh. **8**, 19 ff.), but the phraseology is throughout different; see also Jud. **9**, 34-41; 42-45. 29

(40) The words, *they were drawn away from the city*, which are not syntactically connected with the sentence, are a gloss from Josh. **8**, 16; see below, v. 32. 31

(41) The roads are mentioned also in vv. 32.45; but the description here is hard to understand. There was, of course, a road from Gibeah to Beth-el, but what are we to make of the other road, leading *to* Gibeah? If we assume that the writer had sufficient knowledge of the topography, we should probably

emend, *Géba*. The whole clause, which separates *in the open country* from the words which this phrase qualifies, is probably a misplaced fragment of the preceding gloss; *cf.* v. 32b. 20

(42) The site of Baal-tamar is not known. 33

(43) The ten thousand picked men are the ambush of v. 33. 34

(44) This statement of the loss of Benjamin properly concludes the account of the battle, as in vv. 21.25.46; *cf.* 3,29; Josh. 8,25 f., &c. That the fighting begins anew in v. 36b, as if nothing had happened, is to be ascribed to the fact that vv. 36 ff. come in the main from the older story. 35

(45) V. 29 must have been followed by an account of the beginning of the engagement, which has been supplanted by vv. 30 ff.; after this came vv. 36b ff. 36

(46) The second half of the verse merely repeats the first in other words, and is probably a gloss. 37

(47) This construction of the sentence removes the difficulties under which the common interpretation labors. It had been agreed that when the ambush got possession of the city, they should send up a smoke signal; and that when this appeared, the main body should turn from their feigned flight, and attack the Benjamites. The execution of this stratagem is related in vv. 40 f. 38 f.

(48) The *holocaust of the city*; see Josh. 8,20; and for the expression Deut. 13,16. 40

(49) The wilderness was east of Gibeah, the steep uncultivated slopes which descend to the Jordan; see note on v. 47. 42

(50) The men of the ambush now issued from the destroyed city, and intercepted the retreating Benjamites, who were thus caught and cut to pieces between the two bodies of the enemy.

(51) The text of this verse is extremely corrupt. It apparently gives us the limits of the murderous pursuit; from *Nohah* (see 1 Chron. 8,2) to a point opposite *Geba* eastward. Geba lies in the line of flight from Gibeah to Rimmon (the modern *Rammôn*); and the valley between Geba and Michmash (*Wâdy es-Suweinît*), with its steep and difficult pass (1 Sam. 14,4 ff.), would naturally bring the pursuers to a halt. 43

(52) It is possible that v. 44a is derived from the older source; the phraseology is not that of vv. 21.25.35. If genuine, it can hardly have stood in this place (v. 47a seems to be the immediate sequel of v. 41), but rather in or after v. 47. 44

(53) The first clause is identical with v. 47a, from which it is borrowed. 45

(54) See the note on verse 15. 46

(55) The Cliff of Rimmon, now *Rammôn*, is a high and rocky hill, somewhat more than three miles east of Beth-el (*Beitîn*). It was in a corner of the territory of Benjamin, in the wilderness of Beth-aven (Josh. 18,12). 47

(56) Returning from the pursuit, the Israelites extirpated man and beast through all the land of Benjamin, and burned all the towns; they treated the land as *devoted to destruction* (Heb. *hérem*); see Josh. 6,17 ff.; Deut. 13,15 f. In substance this must have been narrated in the original story (see 21,18 ff.); but in its present form the verse is to be attributed to the later writer. 48

(57) This oath is the point on which the older story turned (see vv. 18.22), as well as the younger (v. 7b). 21,1

(58) These verses bear throughout the marks of a very late age; the account of the expedition against Jabesh in Gilead is an imitation of Num. 31, which itself belongs to a tertiary stratum in P. VV. 4 f. appear to be additions by a still more recent hand. The building of an altar at Beth-el (v. 4) is very strange after 20,26; v. 5a awkwardly anticipates v. 8a; both verses interrupt the connection between v. 3 and v. 6. 2-12

(59) See chapter **20**, verses 18. 23. 26. **21**, 2

(60) See v. 15, in the old story, from which v. 6 also is derived. 3

(61) Jabesh in Gilead (1 Sam. **11**; **31**, 11–13; 2 Sam. **2**, 5 f.; **21**, 12 f.) lay 9
east of the Jordan, within a day's march of Beth-shean. The name survives in
Wâdy Yâbis, but the site of the city has not been recovered.

(62) See Num. **31**, 17. The injunction to preserve the virgin girls (Num. 11
31, 18; see below v. 12) is omitted in the Hebrew text; most Greek copies
have inserted it. (63) Num. **31**, 35. 12

(64) *Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, i. e.* west of the Jordan; see
below, v. 19.

(65) The story of the rape of the Shilonite maidens is of a wholly different 15–25
character from the story of the expedition against Jabesh, and is as unques-
tionably very old as the latter is very late. It has been glossed by a younger
hand in vv. 16. 19. 22; v. 24 is the conclusion of the later version. The text
also has suffered considerably in v. 17ª and perhaps in v. 22.

(66) The extinction of a tribe or clan was a serious calamity, just as it is 15
to-day regarded among the Arabs. See DOUGHTY, *Arabia Deserta*, i, p. 335.

(67) The first half of the verse is to connect the story of the maidens of 16
Shiloh with that of the four hundred virgins from Jabesh in Gilead. The rest
of the verse seems to be properly in place between v. 15 and v. 17ª.

(68) The text is corrupt; the proposed emendation follows certain Greek 17
translations.

(69) The annual feast of JHVH at Shiloh was doubtless, like that of Baal- 19
berith at Shechem (9, 27), a local vintage festival.— *Shiloh* is the modern *Seilûn*,
the position of which is accurately described in the topographical gloss which
follows. The author of this gloss (see also v. 12ᵇ) must have written for
readers, perhaps in foreign lands, who had little knowledge of the ancient
holy places of Israel.— *Lebonah*, now *Lubban*, was about an hour NW of Shiloh.

(70) The insertion of the gloss in v. 19 necessitated the further change in 20
v. 20ª, to recover the connection; it is most natural to regard v. 19ª as
addressed to the Benjamites.

(71) Such dances were performed in celebration of victory (**11**, 34; Exod. 21
15, 20; 1 Sam. **18**, 6), or at religious festivities (Exod. **32**, 19; *cf.* Cant. **6**, 13).

(72) The clause, *because they did not get each a wife in the war*, which 22
creates great difficulty in the context, is apparently a gloss referring to the
attack on Jabesh. The following clauses are probably to be understood, *You
have not broken your oath, since they were taken by force.*

(73) See the note on chapter **17**, verse 6. 25

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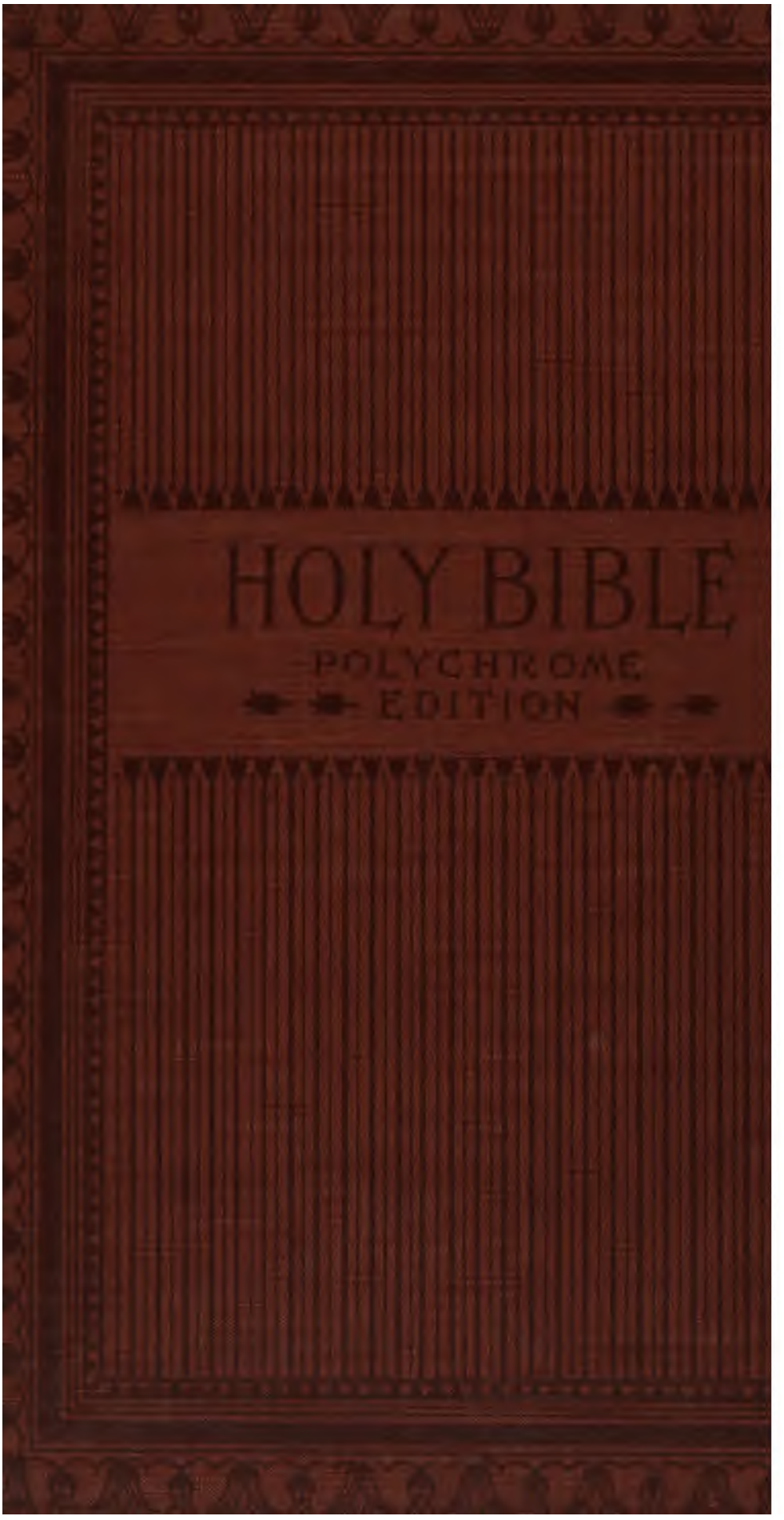
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